

INDEPENDENT

No 2,823

50p

(Republic of Ireland 65p)

How I put my daughter to death

Fred West's confession to murder from beyond grave

WILL BENNETT

The soft Herefordshire accent of Frederick West echoed around the silent Winchester Crown Court yesterday, admitting unemotionally, almost casually, to a series of murders.

Throughout the taped interviews West, who hanged himself in prison on New Year's Day, denied his wife Rosemary had been involved in the 10 murders with which she is charged.

"I would like to stress Rose knew nothing at all," he told detectives, as he described how he had strangled his daughter Heather in a rage and dismembered her body with an axe saw. He said he murdered his first wife Rena after getting her drunk in a pub and then strangled her daughter Charmaine as she lay sleeping in the back of her mother's car.

According to West, he had affairs with several of the girls and young women whose re-

"I never intended to hurt her. I just wanted to grab her to shake her and say, take that stupid smirk off your face"

maines were found at 25 Cromwell Street, Gloucester, last year and then strangled them when they threatened to tell his wife.

The prosecution alleges that many of the victims found buried at 25 Cromwell Street were abducted, gagged, stripped and kept alive while they were sexually abused by the Wests in the cellar at the house. Mrs West, 41, denies murdering nine victims found at 25 Cromwell Street, and one discovered at the West's previous home. Her husband who was charged with 12 murders was found dead in his cell at Winslow Green prison, Birmingham.

Mrs West looked at the floor of the dock as the voice of her dead husband who she alleges carried out the murders alone, dominated the courtroom. She became upset as he described how he killed Heather who vanished aged 16 in 1987.

The day after he was arrested last year he told police that Heather had wanted to leave home and had threatened to give the drug LSD to the other West children if her parents tried to stop her. He said: "I can just remember lunging for her throat and the next moment she had gone blue."

"I never intended to hurt her. I mean I just wanted to grab her to shake her and say, 'Take that stupid smirk off your face'."

West said he dismembered and decapitated her body with an axe saw, put the pieces in a bin and buried her in the garden, after sending Mrs West to spend the night with one of her lovers.

He said: "That is something I have had to live with for eight years. It's not easy, I'll tell you, because I loved Heather."

West then confessed to a series of killings, preparing a sketch for police showing where they would find the remains of the girls buried at 25 Cromwell Street. He said Lynda Gough was under a bathroom floor and admitted he could not remember the name of another victim because "there's so many".

"All the girls did exactly the same thing. It was made quite clear that I was married to Rose and I don't want nothing to do with them, nothing serious", he said, alleging that all of them had threatened to tell his wife about their affairs.

Describing how he killed his first wife, he said: "I took Rena in the pub and got her absolutely paralytic and then took her out to Dymock in the country where I know, and I strangled her and buried her."

"I strangled Rena, dug the hole, cut her up and buried her, and then I went back to the van and I found her car. There was Charmaine in the back of it... So anyway, I strangled her while she was sleeping."

Mr West said he had killed two of his victims after he picked them up as they were hitch-hiking. He said they took the initiative in having sex with him and had demanded money. He said Mrs West had been a restraining influence during the sex attack on Caroline Owens in 1972 for which they were both fined and had not taken part in an assault after that.

Det Con Darren Law told the court Mr West had often changed his story. The case was adjourned until Tuesday. Chilling tapes, page 2

Boris back with a smile but world fears the worst



Slurred speech: Boris Yeltsin yesterday during a meeting with Viktor Chernomyrdin in hospital

Photograph: Reuters

Yeltsin hands over reins of power

MICHAEL SHERIDAN
Diplomatic Editor

President Boris Yeltsin has given up authority over the four key ministries in Russia after his second heart attack and Western governments are now anxiously assessing the prospects for his succession.

The Russian Prime Minister, 57-year-old Viktor Chernomyrdin, said he had assumed control over the four "power ministries" handling defence, security, the interior and foreign affairs. It was the first official admission that Mr Yeltsin, 64, had relinquished some of his presidential powers and confirmed the belief in Western capitals that the Russian leader was dangerously ill, despite claims to the contrary.

It is understood that Russia's Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, confided on Monday to a European opposite number that the President's condition was more serious than had been admitted. Western governments had also learnt that Mr Yeltsin's closest aides were denied access to him for several days after the heart attack on 26 October, indicating its severity.

Russian television showed a 50-second clip of Mr Yeltsin in hospital yesterday, but although he said he felt "not so bad" he looked weak and slurred his words, perhaps as the result of medication. It was his second heart attack in less than four months and the prognosis for men of his age, habits and condition is not good. It is now assumed that Mr Yeltsin will definitely not run for a second term as President next year, and his illness has brought fresh instability to Russian politics ahead of parliamentary elections on 17 December.

A change in Russia's political leadership would raise a series of dramatic issues for the West on questions ranging from nuclear disarmament to the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The concern in the West is that the cause of reform, symbolised by the President and cautiously upheld by Mr Chernomyrdin, could now fall victim to extremist forces in Russia and that the nascent Russian democracy could be extinguished.

Mr Chernomyrdin is seen in London as the man most likely to continue a programme of reform and a moderate foreign policy. But the Prime Minister, a technocrat, has made little headway in campaigning for the December elections and a conspicuous defeat for him in that poll would diminish his chances in a presidential contest.

That could open the field to candidates from the Russian military, from the extreme nationalist right and from the unrepentant remnants of the old Communist Party.

There are already signs that western politicians are seeking to modulate their pronouncements on Russia to take account of the possibility that his next government could be dominated by nationalists or former communists.

On Thursday the Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, said there needed to be closer consideration of the impact of Nato expansion to the east, a proposal virulently opposed in Russia. "We must show understanding for Russian concerns, for instance, for the perception, mistaken though it may be, of exclusion and encirclement," said Mr Rifkind. Extremists in Russia habitually play on such fears to condemn Mr Yeltsin for giving in too easily to the West. PM eases burden, page 11

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Paris bomber 'based in London'

JASON BENNETT

An Algerian extremist living in London was named yesterday as one of the key figures behind the three-month terrorist bombing campaign in France.

The man is accused of masterminding some of the attacks while in Britain and is believed to have given orders to a suspected bomber who was arrested in Paris on Thursday.

Two French newspapers, *Le Monde* and *Le Parisien*, said yesterday that the man in London, known under the pseudonym of Abou Fares, was a senior member of Algeria's Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which has claimed responsibility for most of the attacks. Details of the suspect have been passed to Scotland Yard, which has been working closely with the French authorities since the outbreak of the bombings. Since July, seven people have been killed and around 170 injured.

Abou Fares - which means "the father of knights" - is alleged to be partly responsible for an extremist underground magazine called *Al-Ansar*, which is published and distributed in London. Both he and publication are known to British anti-terrorist officers.

Over the past year the Security Service and the police have privately warned of a likely increase in activities by Algerian Islamic fundamentalists in this country. Algeria claims that Britain has become a haven for Islamic extremists.

French police have confirmed most of the details published in the two French newspapers, which said Abou Fares gave orders to Boualel Bensaid, a 27-year-old Algerian arrested on Thursday. Mr Bensaid is accused of making a phone call, taped by police, in which he allegedly heard to instruct accomplices to plant a car bomb near Lille.

Le Parisien said Abou Fares supplied guerrillas in France with funds, and organised training trips to Afghanistan for Muslim militants. His mobile phone number was also found in an address book belonging to Khalid Kelkal, an Algerian-born bombing suspect killed in a gun battle with police near Lyons in September.

Since the start of the terror campaign the police and M15 have stepped up their surveillance of Algerian extremist groups in Britain. Scotland Yard said yesterday: "We can confirm that the Metropolitan Police has offered its support and advice regarding terrorism and organised crime at high-level meetings between British and French authorities."

"There are already established links... with French officers working in London and a Scotland Yard officer based in Paris. These links have proved invaluable. Following the scale of bombings in London in recent years, we are able to conduct a very productive dialogue with our French counterparts."

London safe haven, page 10

Sinn Fein poses crisis for peace talks

DAVID McKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

The deadlock in the Northern Ireland peace process last night seemed firmer than ever following the failure of talks between Government minister Michael Ancram and a Sinn Féin delegation headed by Martin McGuinness.

Afterwards Mr McGuinness spoke of appealing to the international community in an effort to break the impasse, which centres on the issues of the decommissioning of weaponry and the convening of all-party political negotiations.

Despite much Anglo-Irish diplomacy and a series of meetings between Mr Ancram and Mr McGuinness, there is no obvious sign that the two sides are any closer after many months of discussion.

Mr McGuinness said yesterday: "This is a very serious setback. Like myself most of our supporters will be very disappointed indeed. What we must now do is to appeal to the international community to come to our aid - not to Sinn Féin's aid but to the aid of the people of this island. We need people to recognise that this British government is actively squandering this opportunity for peace."

Mr McGuinness was critical of the government's refusal to endorse a plan for progress which had been drawn up by Sinn Féin President, Gerry Adams, and the leader of the Social and Democratic Labour Party, John Hume. This plan remains unpublished.

Mr Ancram, meanwhile, released a Government document setting out suggestions for a twin-track approach in which "all-party preparatory talks" would be begun while an independent international body was set up to consider the decommissioning issue. Both activities would be undertaken jointly by London and Dublin.

The document raises the possibility of announcing a target date for the opening of all-party political negotiations. The document also avoids mention of "Washington 3," the Government's stipulation that some arms should be de-commissioned before negotiations, although official sources are adamant that this remains the Government's position.

Mr Ancram said of the failure of yesterday's meeting: "It is a setback, but not any greater than some we have had in the past."

In London, it was made clear that Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Northern Ireland Secretary, wants to clear the ground for all-party talks to go ahead by next February. Sir Patrick remains optimistic that the twin-track approach can be up and running by December. He wants the international commission to complete its report to the Irish and British governments by February, clearing the way for all the parties, including Mr Adams, and David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, to sit down together.

IN BRIEF

BA chief quits
Sir Colin Marshall quit the hands-on management of British Airways, but is to remain as part-time chairman. Page 20

Gays lose appeal
The Court of Appeal rejected an appeal by four gay servicemen and women that their dismissal from the forces was unlawful, but said the gay ban was "ripe for review". Page 4

Manchester's Games
Manchester was confirmed as host of the 2002 Commonwealth Games. Page 23

Today's weather
Patchy fog will clear to leave a fine day, with sunshine and light breezes, for most of the country. Page 2

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Rosemary West trial: Detailed confessions to police describe where and how six murders were carried out

Chilling tapes let court into mind of killer

WILL BENNETT

Frederick West told detectives about six murders - including those of his first wife and daughter, Heather - in a series of chilling confessions.

His matter-of-fact tone during the taped interviews held Winchester Crown Court spellbound. He said: "What happened was Heather was going to leave home the day before and we stopped her and said give it the night to talk it over with us because you're too young to leave home anyway, and we'll talk it over."

"Well, I talked it over most of the night. Heather went down to bed... and Heather cried all night she wanted to leave home."

"She (Heather) said 'if you don't fucking let me go I'll give all the kids acid (LSD) and they'll all jump off the church roof and be dead on the floor.'"

"So she stood there and she had a smile and a sort of smirk on her face like 'you try me, I'll

do it'. I lunged at her like that and grabbed her round the throat."

"I held her for a minute, how long I held her for, I don't know. I can't remember because for that few minutes I can't even remember what happened. I can just remember lunging for her throat and the next minute she's gone blue."

"I never intended to hurt her. I mean, I just went to grab her to shake her and say, 'take that stupid smirk off your face' because I was going to smack her across the face."

"I tried to get her into the dustbin. I couldn't get her in there so at that time we used to have one of those big ice-saws for cutting big blocks of ice. So I cut her legs off with that and I'm telling you, I have tried that a million times doing that since then. I cut her head off and then I put her in the bin and put the lid on and rolled it down the bottom of the garden behind the wendy house and covered it up and left it there."

That evening he sent his wife out to spend the night with a coloured man and buried Heather in the garden while she was away.

Detective Constable Hazel Savage asked him: "In how many pieces?"

West: "Three, two legs and a head and a body."

DC Savage: "Did you not get stained at all?"

West: "No, not to my knowledge. Anyway I think I got blood on my hands, not anywhere else."

DC Savage: "What, no blood on you then?"

West: "No, because she was quite cold and that. Really cold before I decided what to do with her."

DC Savage: "What have you told Rose about Heather's whereabouts ever since?"

West: "Rose accepted it then, that she had gone, that she had left home."

"I would like to stress Rose knew nothing at all. Whenever Rose brought it up years later, Rose used to say 'Christ, I wish we'd try and get in contact and find out where Heather is.'"

"Although they didn't get on, she still loved her, same as the rest. And then that's when I used to make excuses up."

West said that his first murder victims were his first wife, Rena, and Charmaine, her daughter by another man: "I went and found Rena and then Charmaine was in the back of the van asleep."

"I took Rena into a pub and got her absolutely paralytic and then took her out to Dymock in the country where I know, and I strangled her and buried her."

"I think Rena had given Charmaine a drink of some sort."



Frederick West: 'They're all exactly the same. I strangled them and then cut them up'

Photograph: PA

a bottle of lager or something. And then she drank that and she was sound asleep and I had forgotten all about her."

"I went back to the van and I found her (Rena's) car. There was Charmaine in the back of it, and I thought 'shit, what am I going to do now?'"

"Anyway, I strangled her while she was still sleeping because there is no way I could have touched her any other way, and wrapped her up in the back and drove back to Midland Road." He buried the child in a back basement.

West later prepared a sketch showing where bodies had been buried at his home.

Detective Constable Savage asked him: "Who's that under the floor in the bathroom?"

West: "Lynda."

DC Savage said, "Lynda who?"

West said, "Gough, is it?"

Asked if he could remember the name of one victim, West replied, "I did know it at the time, but I forgot it now. There's so many, I mean, I know her well because we had had an affair."

"All these girls I've had affairs with and that's why they ended up this way, because they threatened to tell Rose."

"Every one of them did exactly the same thing. 'I love you, I'm pregnant, I'm going to tell Rose, I want you to come and live with me', and that was the problem."

"My main problem was Rose not finding out what was going on."

West claimed he had an affair with another victim, Lucy Partington, after he met her in a park.

He said the relationship lasted about three months: "She said, 'I want to come and live

with you' and all this crap, and I just grabbed her by the throat and then I drove back to Gloucester."

In a later interview, West said that he picked up three women hitchhikers in the Worcester area, one of them a 'Dutch girl'.

"I have no description whatsoever of them because I never actually saw them in daylight as such."

"I was just generally talking to her (the Dutch girl) as I was going along and the next minute she sat on the engine, and the next minute she had got my fly undone and messing about. So I did the same."

"We made love, I think we made love twice, I think we did one after the other, and then she said, 'that'll be ten quid, or something'. And I said, 'well, I don't carry money. And anyway, I wouldn't pay a prostitute.'"

"She started shouting and she

said, 'you're the sort of person who goes with slags, or something'. As soon as she said that I thought of Rose, and Rose is no slag as far as I was concerned, so I went for her and then the same thing happened with her."

"I smacked her up against the [lorry] window and she just dropped. I strangled her, or held my hands around her neck anyway, and that was it."

Detective Constable Savage asked him: "Are you responsible for killing all of these people, Fred? Can you tell me whether the way you killed them was different?"

West replied: "No, they're all exactly the same. I strangled them and then cut them up."

Detective Constable Savage asked: "Is there anybody else involved with you?"

West replied: "Nobody at all."



According to the tapes, Heather West (left) was strangled while Rosemary West (right) was shopping



Lottery chief says charities suffer

GLENDIA COOPER

Small charities have suffered as a result of the National Lottery, a senior member of Camelot admitted yesterday.

David Rigg, Camelot director of communications, told the Charities Aid Foundation conference that "the jury was still out" on the lottery's long-term impact but some charities had suffered and "suffered precisely at the same time as the National Lottery started".

Since the lottery was launched nearly a year ago, charities and most recently the Church of England have said

that revenue would be lost. Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive of the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), said the loss to charities could be as much as £39m by the end of the first year set against the projected £245m the National Lottery Charity Board has to give out.

In July to September 1995, 10 per cent fewer people gave to charity than in the same months in 1992/3, and NCVO estimates 6.4 per cent of giving is being diverted to buying lottery tickets.

The first grants donated by the board last month have proved controversial. David

Steff, chairman of the lottery's charity board, said it had surveyed nearly 8,000 voluntary organisations to learn their views and identify their priorities.

While Mr Steff said most priorities were consistent with the board's thinking, "there were some notable cases where the respondents' views were quite different from those of the board - particularly in respect of the low ranking they gave to refugees, women's issues, ethnic and cultural minorities and other people affected by discrimination."

Such groups were the focus of media criticism when the

grants were announced. Mr Steff said: "These journalists seem to believe their readers would rather step over the corpses of the victims of drug abuse, HIV illness, refugees from overseas and those unable to afford shelter."

Meanwhile, it emerged last night that the National Lottery Charities Board has spent £1.2m on consultancy fees and nearly £50,000 on members' expenses, according to parliamentary answers given to the Labour MP John Hutton.

Spending on consultants averaged nearly £25,000 for each week of the board's existence.

PR firm cuts Mellor link

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES and CHRIS BLACKHURST

Shandwick, the world's largest PR consultancy, has ended a two-year relationship with the Conservative MP David Mellor in advance of a series of key Commons votes on Monday on cleaning up standards in public life.

While Wednesday's select committee report rejected the original Nolan recommendation for a ban on multi-client consultancies in favour of a specific ban on advocating clients' causes in Parliament, the agency had already decided at the end of October not to renew its con-

tract with Mr Mellor, the former heritage secretary and MP for Putney.

Colin Trusler, managing director of Shandwick UK, said he wanted to "stand clear" of the debate over links between MPs and multi-client consultancies.

Mr Mellor's entry in the Register of Members' Interests says he does not lobby ministers or speak on behalf of Shandwick clients in the Commons, or table questions on their behalf. He said yesterday: "In the present climate it seemed appropriate

that after two happy years this arrangement should come to an end, and it has ended."

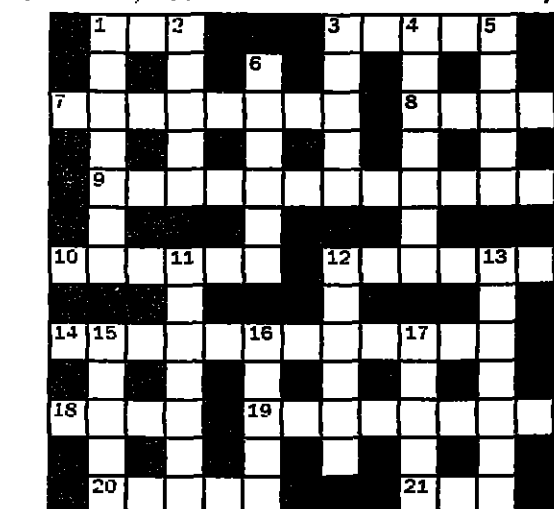
The move is the latest sign of the trend of lobbyists cancelling or altering their relationships with MPs.

Labour yesterday stepped up its campaign for relevant earnings to be publicly declared, publishing a list of 125 Tory MPs who act as part-time consultants or advisers in a bid to persuade them to "act in the public interest" by backing a Labour amendment on Monday.

concise crossword

No. 2823 Saturday 4 November

By Paula



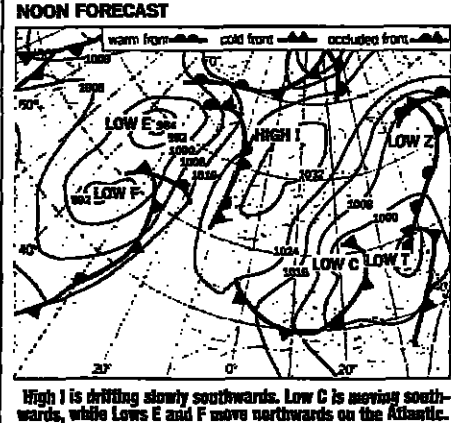
- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Carpentary tool (3) | 1 Financial backer (7) |
| 3 Frivolous (5) | 2 Shrink back (5) |
| 7 Heavy shower (8) | 3 Loose stones (5) |
| 8 Slightly open (4) | 4 Window cloth (7) |
| 9 Horse race (12) | 5 Irish poet (5) |
| 10 Decent (6) | 6 Reddish metal (6) |
| 12 Uncommon thing (6) | 11 Enclosed field (7) |
| 14 Nonsense! (12) | 12 Dividend (6) |
| 18 Grain store (4) | 13 Give evidence (7) |
| 19 Uncivilised (8) | 15 Balearic island (5) |
| 20 At an oblique angle (5) | 16 Arm joint (5) |
| 21 Cunning (3) | 17 Utter confusion (5) |

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

Across: 1 Tacks, 4 Affair (Tack fare), 9 Bonfire, 10 Mason, 11 Echo, 12 Ukulele, 13 Woe, 14 Vista, 16 Lash, 18 Ply, 20 Viscera, 21 Bear, 24 Nadir, 25 Escaped, 26 Errata, 27 Nerve, Down: 1 Tabler, 2 Clinch, 3 Spill, 5 Farouki, 6 Abacus, 7 Bender, 13 Square, 15 Water rat, 16 Insider, 17 Evince, 18 Paier, 19 Bridle, 22 Super, 23 Icon

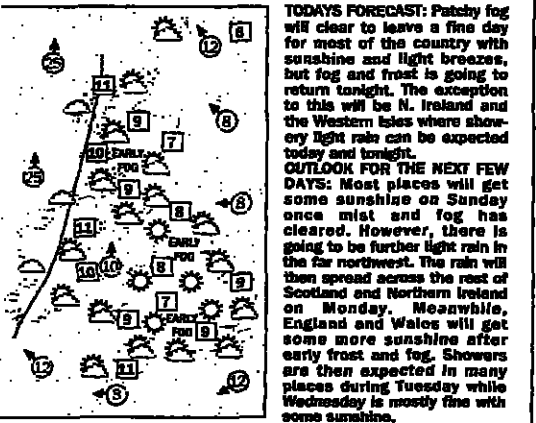
weather

NOON FORECAST



High is drifting slowly southwards. Low C is moving southwards, while Low E and F move northwards on the Atlantic.

WORLD WEATHER	WORLD WEATHER	WORLD WEATHER	WORLD WEATHER	WORLD WEATHER	WORLD WEATHER
London 12.5C	Paris 12.5C	Rome 14.5C	Madrid 13.5C	Amsterdam 11.5C	Brussels 11.5C
Berlin 11.5C	Frankfurt 11.5C	Zurich 11.5C	Geneva 11.5C	Basel 11.5C	Stuttgart 11.5C
Munich 11.5C	Düsseldorf 11.5C	Cologne 11.5C	Dortmund 11.5C	Essen 11.5C	Duisburg 11.5C
Dresden 11.5C	Hamburg 11.5C	Berlin 11.5C	Warsaw 11.5C	Vienna 11.5C	Budapest 11.5C
Prague 11.5C	Bratislava 11.5C	Belgrade 11.5C	Sofia 11.5C	Bucharest 11.5C	Cluj-Napoca 11.5C
Istanbul 11.5C	Ankara 11.5C	Aten 11.5C	Thessaloniki 11.5C	Sofia 11.5C	Bucharest 11.5C
Cluj-Napoca 11.5C	Istanbul 11.5C	Ankara 11.5C	Aten 11.5C	Thessaloniki 11.5C	Sofia 11.5C



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Berlin 11.5C	Frankfurt 11.5C	Zurich 11.5C	Geneva 11.5C	Basel 11.5C	Stuttgart 11.5C
Munich 11.5C	Düsseldorf 11.5C	Cologne 11.5C	Dortmund 11.5C	Essen 11.5C	Duisburg 11.5C
Dresden 11.5C	Hamburg 11.5C	Berlin 11.5C	Warsaw 11.5C	Vienna 11.5C	Budapest 11.5C
Prague 11.5C	Bratislava 11.5C	Belgrade 11.5C	Sofia 11.5C	Bucharest 11.5C	Cluj-Napoca 11.5C
Istanbul 11.5C	Ankara 11.5C	Aten 11.5C	Thessaloniki 11.5C	Sofia 11.5C	Bucharest 11.5C
Cluj-Napoca 11.5C	Istanbul 11.5C	Ankara 11.5C	Aten 11.5C	Thessaloniki 11.5C	Sofia 11.5C

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'Independent' survey: three members of opposition front bench side with Clare Short in row over legalisation of soft drug

Cannabis inquiry backed by 27 Labour MPs

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Political Correspondent

A number of Labour MPs support Clare Short's suggestion that there should be an inquiry into the legalisation of cannabis, a survey by the Independent reveals.

Among the 91 MPs responding - accounting for a third of the parliamentary party - 27 said the legal status of cannabis should be reconsidered, including three with front bench jobs, two of whom pre-

The questions we asked

1. Do you think that the Labour party should consider the legalisation of cannabis?
2. Do you think Clare Short was right to speak out as she did on David Frost's programme, or do you think she should have stuck to her brief?
3. Have you ever used cannabis yourself?

ferred to remain anonymous. Twenty-one said it should not, 42 declined to comment and one was undecided.

Thirteen of the MPs also said that Ms Short, the recent-

ly appointed Labour spokeswoman on transport, was right to speak her mind on the issue when questioned on BBC 1's *Breakfast with Frost* last Sunday. Her remarks drew an im-

mediate slap-down from the Labour leader, Tony Blair, who instructed all Shadow Cabinet members to observe collective responsibility. Ms Short was obliged to issue a retraction.

Ms Short's intervention was all the more embarrassing because Labour's opposition to an inquiry into the drug laws was used to attack Chris Davies, the Liberal Democrat victor in the Littleborough and Saddleworth by-election.

Five of the MPs admitted they had used the drug.

George Foulkes, an overseas development spokesman (who has not done so), agreed that the party should consider the legalisation of cannabis. Another front-bencher agreed while a third called for a Royal Commission.

Other MPs prepared to publicly admit their support for further inquiry or debate were Bob Hughes (Aberdeen North), Helen Jackson (Sheffield Hillsborough), Max Madden (Bradford West), Brian Donohoe (Cunningham South), Jer-

my Corbyn (Islington North), Paddy Tipping (Sherwood), George Stevenson (Stoke-on-Trent South), Tony Banks (Newham North West), Jimmy Hood (Clydesdale), and Frank Cook (Stockton North).

Jim Cousins (Newcastle Central) said cannabis should not be legalised for general use but should be considered for use as a medicine.

Mr Madden said: "What she said is extremely welcome. It is very much the job of a radical political party to raise such

issues." He added: "Labour MPs would feel utter despair if they thought the front bench was being prevented from saying things that might upset Tory MPs or the tabloid press."

Mr Corbyn, a left-winger, said the issue of legalisation needed to be separated from the furor over Ms Short. "She has a right to an opinion - but she was inept to let the interview wander," he said.

Of the five admitting they had tried cannabis, only Mr Tipping was prepared to go public, say-

ing he had done so at university. He added there was a strong case for its use in pain relief, for example for MS sufferers.

Jim Cunningham (Coventry South East), said he went on a parliamentary visit to Amsterdam, where the drug is effectively legalised, and was not impressed. Mr Cook said some at Littleborough and Saddleworth "went overboard in quite a disgraceful manner".

Research by Ben Summers, Lindsey Sheffield and Louise Jury.

End of an Asprey era: Two hundred-year tradition over as 'Queen's gift shop' passes into foreign ownership



Royal family: The Asprey shop in Bond Street, central London, which has been sold in a package which includes other designer names such as Mappin & Webb and Garrard

Photograph: Reuters

Crown jewellers sold off for a princely £250m

NIGEL COPE

Another British landmark succumbed to foreign ownership yesterday when Asprey, the Queen's jewellers, was sold to Prince Jefri Bolkiah of Brunei, the Sultan of Brunei's brother, for nearly £250m.

The deal gives the Prince control of Asprey's Bond Street store in London which is frequently referred to as the Queen's gift shop, as well as Garrard, the Royal jewellers, Mappin & Webb and a host of other designer names.

The deal marks the end of more than 200 years of independence for the upmarket jeweller which was founded by William Asprey in 1781 and has been controlled by the Asprey family ever since.

It also closes a difficult chapter for the company which has been facing a slump in demand from its wealthy customers and has struggled with the effects of an ambitious expansion programme in the past few years.

Asprey joins a long list of prestige London landmarks

that have been snapped up by wealthy overseas buyers. The Dorchester Hotel is owned by the Sultan of Brunei, the Al-Fayed family owns Harrods, and Harvey Nichols, the Knightsbridge department store, was sold to a Hong Kong businessman, Dickson Poon, in 1991.

Prince Jefri has been a friend of the Aspreys for many years and is a regular customer in the store. Of the £243m he is paying, more than £100m will go to the Asprey family which is selling all but 10 per cent of its shareholding.

John Rolfe Asprey, a direct descendant of the founder, will remain as chairman and continue to serve the store's wealthiest customers.

John Asprey said: "My family and I have known Prince Jefri and his family for many years. His ownership of Asprey will enhance the style and status of the group and the Asprey family is delighted to play an important role in its future."

However insiders believe that

Mr Asprey is likely to be deeply hurt by the surrender of a business that has been in his family for so long.

One insider said: "He will put a brave face on it. But it must hurt him. I just never thought John would do it. To be the one who sells the family business after all this time must be very difficult."

He has previously battled hard to maintain control of the business.

In 1980 the company was almost acquired by Dunhill, the luxury goods group, after a bitter feud split the family. One faction was keen to sell but John and other supporters retained control by buying out the dissenting shareholders.

He vowed then that he would never lose control of the business. "I expect it will go on in the family for ever," he said.

However after a good spell in the economic boom of the 1980s the company has fallen on hard times. Under a flamboyant chief executive, Naim Attallah, the company embarked on a rapid expansion

programme intended to broaden the group's customer base beyond the rich and royal.

In a few years the company bought Mappin & Webb from Sears, Watches of Switzerland from Ratners, and Les Ambassadeurs, a Swiss jewellery group.

But the worldwide recession wrong-footed the group and the steady stream of wealthy visitors to the Bond Street store began to dry up.

A profit warning last year signalled the start of the decline. The share price plunged and it emerged this year that most of the group's assets were in hock to Lloyds Bank.

In June the company announced a £10m loss and revealed that its third largest profit contribution came from its pawnbroking division.

Figures issued yesterday show that Asprey made profits of £1.2m in the six months to September. With its new backer, the company is confident that it can now invest in its stores and improve their financial performance.

Rise and fall of the House of Asprey

1781: Founded by William Asprey in Mitcham, Surrey, selling dressing cases.

1832: Appointed dressing case maker to the King.

1841: Opens flagship store in Bond Street.

1861: Appointed jeweller to Queen Victoria.

1980: Asprey family almost loses control to Dunhill.

1981: Business listed on Unlisted Securities Market.

1990: Naim Attallah appointed joint managing director. Takes business on acquisition spree.

1990-93: Asprey buys Mappin & Webb, Watches of Switzerland and Les Ambassadeurs.

1994: First signs of trouble. Asprey shares and profits slump, hit by decline in wealthy overseas buyers, among them, the Sultan of Brunei and Prince Jefri.

1995: Asprey sold to Sultan of Brunei's brother, Prince Jefri, for £243m.

Big spender with a playboy image

SIMON PINCOMBE

Prince Jefri Bolkiah, the flamboyant finance minister of the oil-rich kingdom of Brunei, is by far the less reserved of the two main Brunei royals. Yesterday's purchase of Asprey's - of which he was a big client - is the latest in a string of private investments which have earned him a playboy image.

Both Prince Jefri and the Sultan, the world's richest man, enjoy polo and collecting expensive cars. But there the similarity ends. The Sandhurst-trained Sultan, 49, takes his role as the head of a Muslim state very seriously, according to his aides. "He is a very shy man who does his best to keep a low profile," says one insider. "If stories of huge wealth start appearing, it's usually because of Prince Jefri."

It was Prince Jefri, not the Sultan, who hired Rod Stewart to perform at his son's birthday party in August. It was Prince Jefri who ordered Rolls-Royce to go back to the drawing board and design a Bentley estate worth £500,000. It was Prince Jefri who paid £55m for the old Playboy Club, his Park Lane home, and had the builders ex-



Flamboyant: Prince Jefri

cavate a spectacular atrium from within its seven storeys.

Separating who owns what in the Brunei royal family can be a tricky business. Many of the investments, such as the Dorchester, Beverly Hills Hilton and the New York Palace Hotel are owned by the Brunei Investment Agency.

Between them the two royals own more than 20 residences in and around London and countless properties abroad. The Sultan is said to have a £22bn fortune and an oil income of £6m a day on which no tax is levied. But neither he nor the BIA confirm or deny assets or transactions.

Dulwich parents call on board to resign

IAN MACKINNON

Parents of pupils at Dulwich College in south London yesterday called on the school's board of governors to quit over its handling of sexual harassment allegations against the headmaster which forced his resignation.

Many felt that the time which it had taken the board to investigate and reach a decision over the accusations made against Anthony Verity, 56, by his secretary, had made it impossible for him to continue.

As they spoke of their dismay at his departure, despite being cleared of any sexual impropriety with Anne Ridley, 38, all 1,400 parents received a two-page letter outlining the reasons for the governors' decision.

The letter, signed by Sir Colin Cole, the board's chairman, reiterates the reason for his retirement given after a meeting on Thursday between the governors and Mr Verity, saying he had allowed "an inappropriate relationship to develop and that this affected the performance of his duties".

Even though Mr Verity strongly disputes that view, he decided to resign from his £100,000-a-year post after an agreement over a financial package, rumoured to be about £500,000, had been struck. Mrs Ridley has also left and received compensation.

The letter says the process to select a successor will begin next week, but rejects any suggestion that the board dragged its feet, and was always aware of the "need to resolve the matter speedily" following Mr Verity's suspension in August over allegations in March.

But one of the most outspoken parents, Sue Macdiarmid, with three boys at the school, questioned the board's actions.

"The more we hear of this, the more it seems like a catalogue of disastrous decisions made by the board from March onwards," she said. "It reveals the inability to deal with a small management problem. The incompetence of the board has now become an injustice."

She also accused the board of moving the goalposts once it became clear that the sexual harassment allegation could not be proven. The board had called his performance into question when that had not been raised when he was first suspended.

Finally, Mrs Macdiarmid called on Sir Colin and the board to resign, a demand echoed by others who wished to remain anonymous. "Boys, parents and staff at Dulwich College deserve better than this," Mrs Macdiarmid said.

Bob Alexander, clerk to the board, declined to comment.

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news

Changing the guard: While courts advocate a review on gays in the forces, service chiefs prepare to fight for the 'status quo'

Forces gay ban 'ripe for review'

Navy ready for 'battle' against homosexuals

STEPHEN WARD
Legal Correspondent

A Court of Appeal judge told the Government yesterday its ban on gays in the armed forces was "ripe for review and for consideration of its replacement by a strict conduct code".

The conclusions of Lord Justice Henry on a legal challenge to the ban confirm the outspoken views of Lord Justice Brown in the High Court earlier this year, that the Government has the legal right to dismiss gays, but that the policy is outdated and should be lifted.

In their judgment yesterday the three judges, led by the Master of the Rolls, Sir Thomas Bingham, unanimously rejected an appeal by four gay servicemen and women that their dismissal from the forces was unlawful. They had not demonstrated, as they need to under the law, that the ban on gays was an irrational policy.

The four, who all had good service records, have four weeks to ask the House of Lords to consider the case. If the Lords refuse, they have said they will go to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, where they are thought almost certain to be successful.

The Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames welcomed the ruling yesterday. "We are absolutely delighted that the policy of excluding homosexuals from the armed forces has been examined in great depth by the High Court and the Court of



Ruled out: (from left) Graeme Grady, John Beckett, Jeanette Smith and Duncan Lustig-Praen, after the judgment

Appeal and found to be lawful and rational," he said, adding that the decision would be greeted with great relief in the services. However, he pledged that the current review of the ban would continue. The ministry will report its conclusions to a Commons select committee early next year. Both the courts have criticised the lack of evidence to back the Ministry of Defence policy.

In his judgment, Sir Thomas Bingham said: "The existing policy cannot in my judgment be stigmatised as irrational at the time when these appellants were discharged." He added: "Major policy changes should be the product of mature reflection, not instant reaction."

In the High Court earlier this year Lord Justice Brown said he refused the applications with "hesitation and regret". He said the "tide of history" was

against the Ministry of Defence and predicted that the policy would eventually collapse, but said it was for Parliament and not the courts to change the law. Duncan Lustig-Praen, a former Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy, fought the case with Graeme Grady, 32, an

ex-RAF sergeant; Jeanette Smith, 28, an ex-RAF nurse and John Beckett, 25, a former navy weapons engineer. He said: "What I find a shame is that our admirals and generals continue to dance a horripole of homophobia. Discharges continue and lives are being destroyed."

STEPHEN WARD

Service chiefs are planning a major battle to keep gays out of the armed forces, a leaked letter between two leading Navy figures reveals.

The letter from the Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet, Admiral Sir Hugo White, to the First Sea Lord, Sir Jock Slater, was leaked to the gay rights group Stonewall. He says: "As in all battles timing is everything, and I know that Chiefs of Staff not only intend but are already vigorously defending the status quo, and are determined to act in the most effective way at the optimum moment to do so. I would ask you to discourage any self-defeatist view that we shall inevitably lose our case."

The letter, written before the Ministry of Defence announced it was reviewing the policy, reveals a belief among the senior figures that homophobia is deeply entrenched at all levels. His letter gives the results of a survey of attitudes among Navy staff down to mess-deck level, which has been "far reaching and conducted with considerable sensitivity".

Sir Hugo, 56, who has left the Royal Navy to become Governor of Gibraltar, pleads with his superior against carrying out another survey for ministers be-

cause such surveys have "an unsettling effect" of making people think the Navy is moving towards a more tolerant attitude. Comparisons with other countries' experiences were widely seen as fallacious because "we have unique cultural traditions and tend to be sexually more conservative than many other countries".

There was general concern that "the image of Servicemen would degrade" if gays were allowed to serve.

"We found some, but not many, liberal-minded individuals among mainly junior officers and men who said they would not object to relaxation in principle, but when asked whether they would object to sharing bunk spaces, crowded mess-decks, showers and undressing in close proximity to homosexuals they admitted they would not like it. The majority declared revulsion at the prospect."

He adds: "The threat of sexual corruption among the sexually immature within the Fleet would be real, and a deterrent to potential recruits and their parents. More broadly, people in the Fleet do not see why it should be used for what they perceive to be social experimentation as a result of vociferous lobbying by a minority group."

Barclay twins to take control at 'Scotsman'

Five of Scotland's newspapers, including the flagship title, the *Scotsman*, have been sold by the Thomson Corporation to complete the sale of its UK newspaper publishing interests, it said yesterday.

A company owned by David and Frederick Barclay, whose interests include the *European* newspaper, have acquired Thomson's Edinburgh newspaper centre, which publishes the *Scotsman*, the *Edinburgh Evening News* and *Scotland on Sunday*, for an undisclosed sum.

The corporation's Aberdeen centre - which publishes the *Evening Express* and the *Press and Journal* - is to go to Northcliffe Newspapers, a subsidiary of the Daily Mail and General Trust, for £82m.

Thomson said the sale of the Edinburgh centre had been completed but the sale to



Barclay twins: Investing in prestigious titles

Northcliffe of the Aberdeen centre was subject to review by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, and clearance by the Department of Trade and Industry. Until then, the Ab-

erdeen centre will be managed by Thomson.

The Scottish sell-off follows the sale by Thomson in July of its centres in Belfast, Cardiff, Chester, Newcastle and Teesside to Trinity International Holdings, and of its Luton centre to Enap.

Thomson Corporation president Michael Brown said of the new owners: "We believe they will strongly support the independence of the newspapers and continue their development. We are most appreciative of the support and loyalty of all our staff in our UK newspaper businesses over the years and particularly during the last few months."

Thomson's main activities are specialised information and publishing, newspaper publishing in North America, and leisure travel in the UK.

School faces 'hanging' inquiry

Pupils at a secondary school were being interviewed by police yesterday after a bullying attack in which a boy was left hanging unconscious by his tie in a gymnasium.

The 11-year-old boy was strung up on climbing bars in the gym at the Hayling School, Hayling Island, near Portsmouth, Hampshire.

He was discovered choking on the blue and yellow striped tie by a cleaner after being left

to fend for himself by his tormentors. The youngster's feet were not touching the ground.

The cleaner released him and he was taken to Queen Alexandra hospital, Cosham, suffering from neck injuries.

He was discharged after treatment and was recovering at home last night.

Detective Chief Inspector Nick Imber, of Hampshire police, described the incident as "a nasty attack of bullying that

could have had tragic consequences".

Derek Holmes, the school's chairman of governors, said: "Any incident which affects children in this way is obviously very serious and I'm sure it will be treated very seriously."

The school was the subject of a harsh report by a government inspector last year. The report criticised the way the school was run and expressed concerns over health and safety issues.



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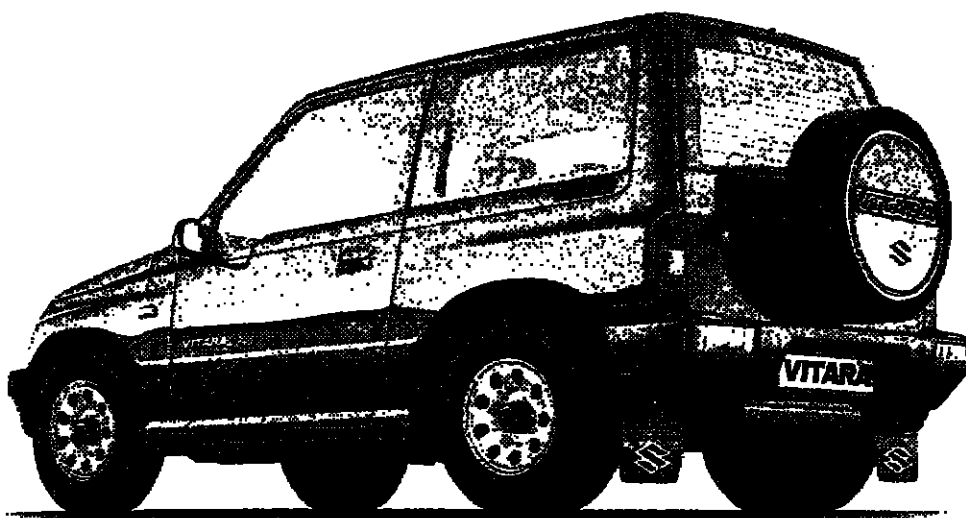
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مكتبة القرآن الكريم

Deputy Prime Minister: Enormous expenditure on Michael Heseltine's new Government department comes under attack

Empire in Whitehall costs a king's ransom

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Michael Heseltine yesterday shrugged off attacks on the estimated £495,000 he is costing the taxpayer.

Self-doubt is not a recognised trait of the First Secretary to the Treasury and Deputy Prime Minister, who now occupies one of the largest offices in Whitehall, dubbed 10A Downing Street.

He has taken unprecedented powers in running the Whitehall machine from the 872 sq ft suite of rooms he has commandeered at the Cabinet Office.

And he can control the whole machine on the "Hezzanet" - a £150,000 information technology system linking his desk to the desks of every other minister in the Government.

The electronic system allows the Deputy Prime Minister to notify every minister in Whitehall of his orders for the day. He can look into every one of his

colleagues' ministerial diaries, and log on to the departmental diaries, in an attempt to ensure that the Government is singing the same tune.

With the Prime Minister attending the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in New Zealand, the Deputy Prime Minister's own diary for next week underlines his seniority in the Government. He has his own session of Question Time on Monday, before appearing again on Tuesday to answer Prime Minister's Questions for John Major.

On Saturday, he is likely to represent the Government for the Prime Minister at the Remembrance Concert at the Royal Albert Hall and on Remembrance Sunday he will again deputise for Mr Major, laying the Government's wreath at the Cenotaph.

The next day, he is due to go into a private clinic for an operation to remove a kidney stone. After his heart attack in

Italy, there were doubts that he would come back to office, but he has bounced back, giving the Tory party conference in Blackpool a pantomime performance to remember.

He is no longer seen as a threat to Mr Major - in spite of continued speculation about the deal struck after the July leadership contest - but he has his fingers in every Whitehall pie. If Mr Major fell under the pro-verbal bus, Mr Heseltine would effortlessly move next door.

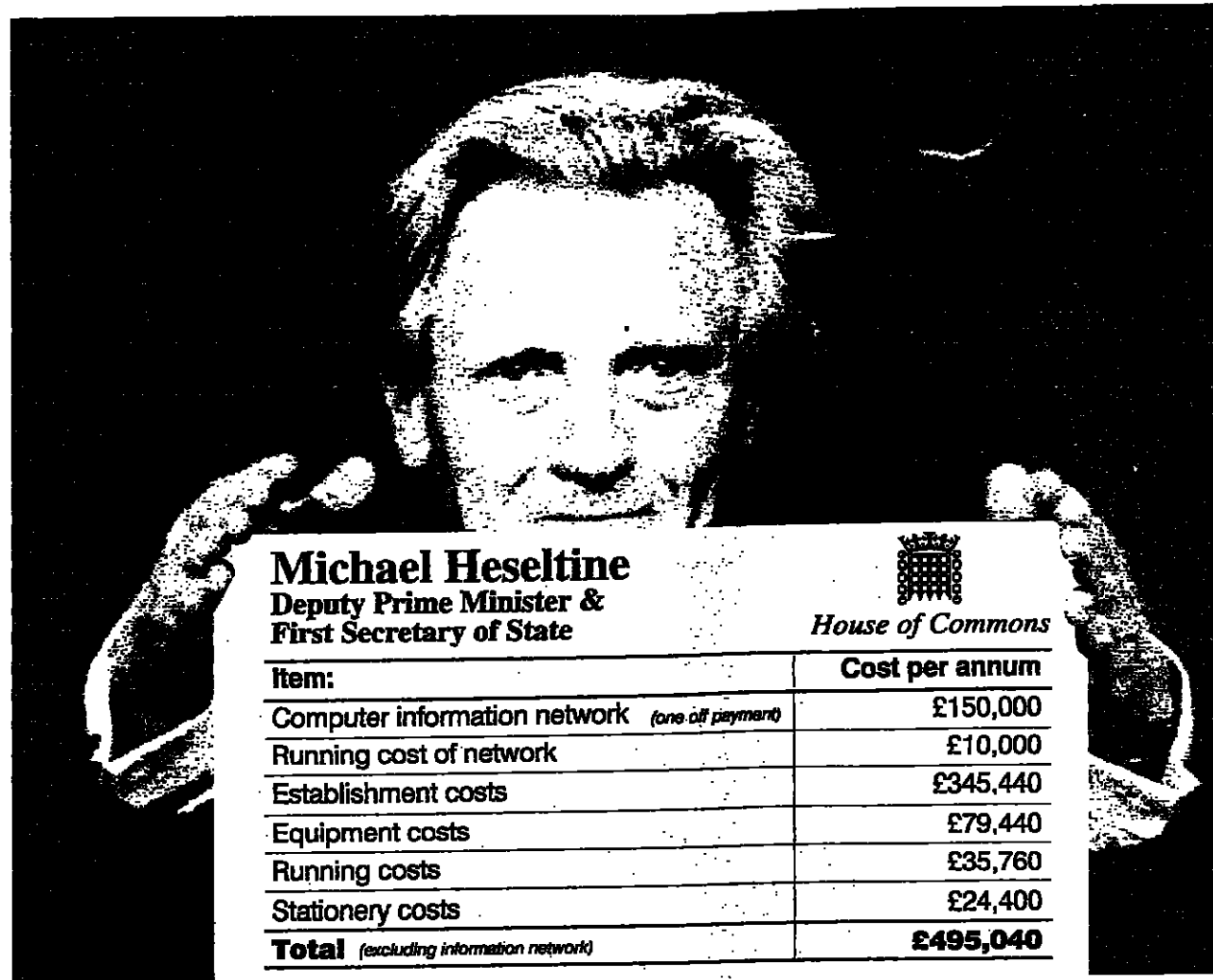
His treatment of his Cabinet deputy, Roger Freeman, has led colleagues to dub Mr Freeman "Sooty", because he seems to be at Mr Heseltine's command.

Mr Heseltine has his own stationery, emblazoned with the crest used by the Cabinet Office and his titles: "Deputy Prime Minister and First Secretary of State". His total annual paper bill will be £24,400. In addition, he has his own staff costing £345,440 a year.

The Liberal Democrats claim that the true cost of having a Deputy Prime Minister is even higher. They point out that he "privatised" his own ministerial driver, when he resigned under Baroness Thatcher, and still employs his own chauffeur, with a Daimler, at a cost of £43,628, excluding VAT.

His ministerial salary is £42,834, in addition to his reduced Parliamentary pay. The four rooms he occupies, including a refurbished conference room he has turned into his private office, would cost around £77,000 a year in rent on the open market, according to the Liberal Democrats, who say the real cost of Mr Heseltine's empire is £753,000.

Mr Heseltine undoubtedly believes the Government is getting a bargain at the price. But Roger Freeman's suggestion that MPs should retire at 60 was regarded in Whitehall yesterday as a way of getting back at his boss. Michael Heseltine is 62.



Michael Heseltine
Deputy Prime Minister &
First Secretary of State

House of Commons

Item:	Cost per annum
Computer information network (one off payment)	£150,000
Running cost of network	£10,000
Establishment costs	£345,440
Equipment costs	£79,440
Running costs	£35,760
Stationery costs	£24,400
Total (excluding information network)	£495,040

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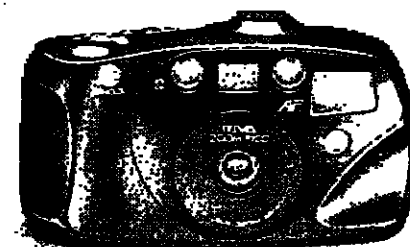
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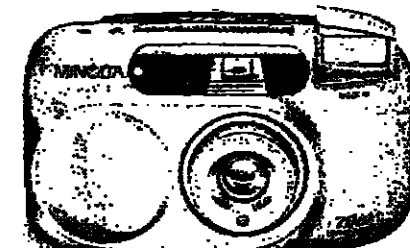
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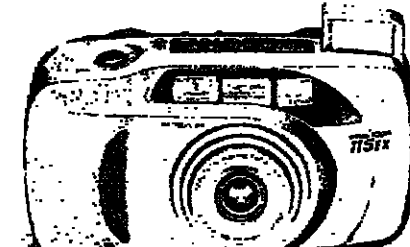
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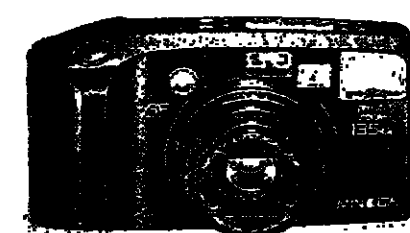
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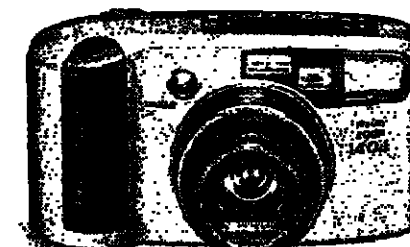
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Church sells its Sky shares over porn channel

ANDREW BROWN
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The Church of England yesterday sold all its shares in BSkyB, worth a total of £3.6m as a response to the launch of the soft porn Playboy Channel on the satellite network.

Speaking on London's Premier Radio, the Church Commission's stock exchange investment manager, Tony Hardy, said: "We have held a review and have reached a decision that it would be appropriate to sell our holding in BSkyB."

"We wish to give a clear signal that the commissioners do not wish to benefit from firms directly marketing pornography."

However, the Church Commissioners, who manage most of the Church of England's assets, still hold shares in Reed-Elsevier, the media group which owns IPC, the publishers of *Loaded* magazine, whose latest issue contains a tasteless spoof on alleged Hindu miracles.

The decision by the commissioners, who had £2m worth of shares in BSkyB out of stock market investments worth about £1bn, and the Church's Central Board of Finance, which had a further £1.6m invested in the company, follows

the announcement that the Methodist central authorities had sold their shares in the enterprise three weeks ago.

The new channel offers subscribers programmes such as *The Secrets of Making Love* and *101 Ways to Excite Your Lover*. BSkyB, which is controlled by Rupert Murdoch, has a 40 per cent stake in the channel.

The decision represents an extension of the previous policy on ethical investment into uncharted areas, and reflects the hugely increased sensitivity of the Church Commissioners to church-going opinion since they lost £800m in property speculation during the late 1980s.

Both the Anglican and Methodist churches have ethical investment policies which prohibit them from investing in companies whose main business is in the arms trade, gambling, tobacco, alcohol, or newspapers. A spokesman for the Roman Catholic Church said: "There isn't a central investment policy. Each diocese makes its own investment decisions."

The Church Commissioners' policy, however clear-cut in principle, tends to blur around the edges. They have invested £9m in GEC, which in turn owns VSEL, which makes Trident

submarines. A spokesman said yesterday that the key criterion was whether a company's main business lay in objectionable areas.

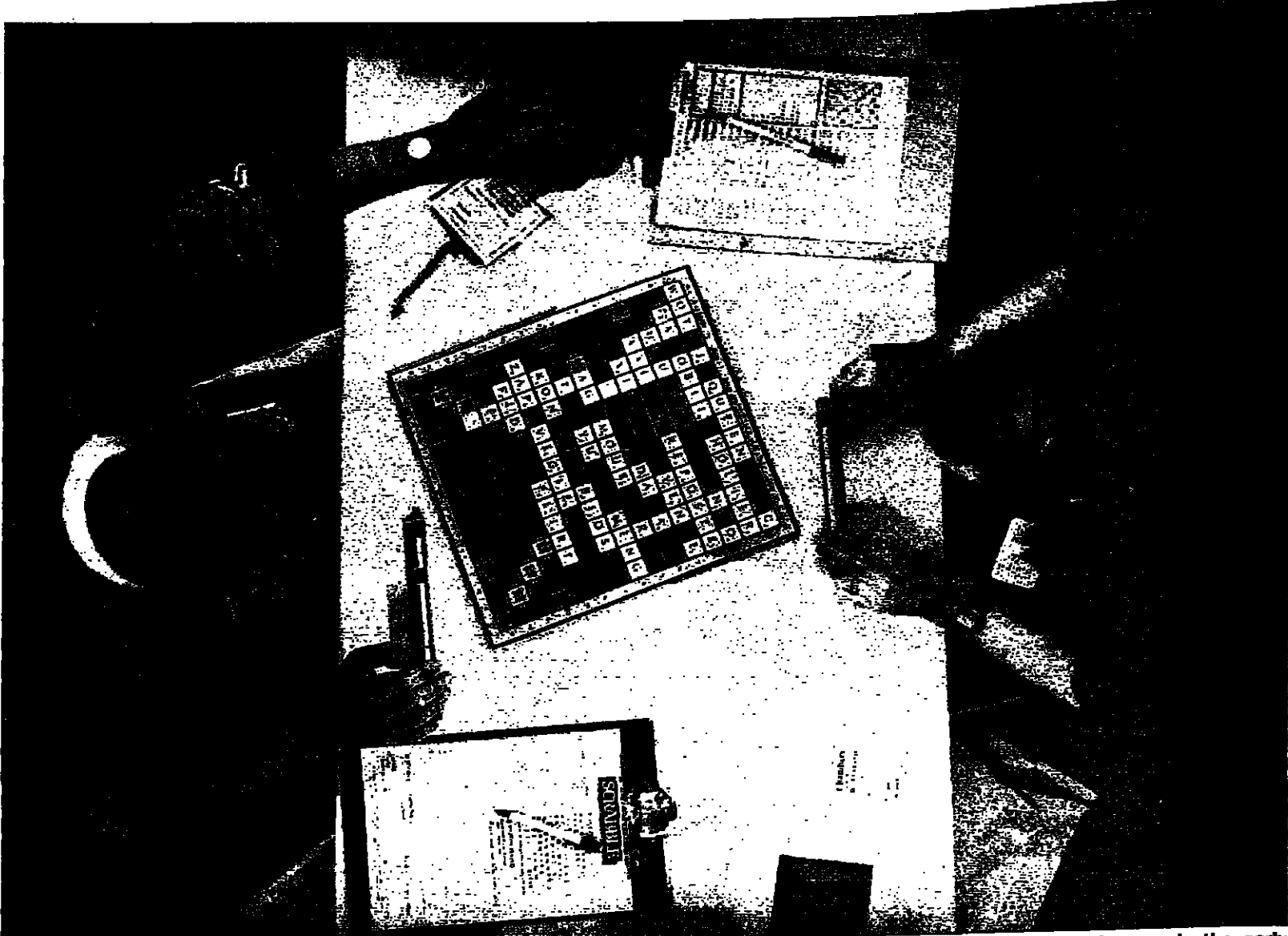
Reed-Elsevier, which owns IPC Magazines, which in turn owns *Loaded*, is a case in point. The latest issue of *Loaded* contains a picture of a Hindu deity apparently drinking from a beer can "after three days in the office", and the whole magazine is devoted to the laddish lifestyle.

"I don't think we currently monitor the contents of *Loaded*," said a spokesman for the commissioners. "There is a difference between the Playboy TV channel which is marketed as soft pornography and the contents of a magazine."

Neither the commissioners nor the church's Central Board of Finance own shares in any other media group than Reed.

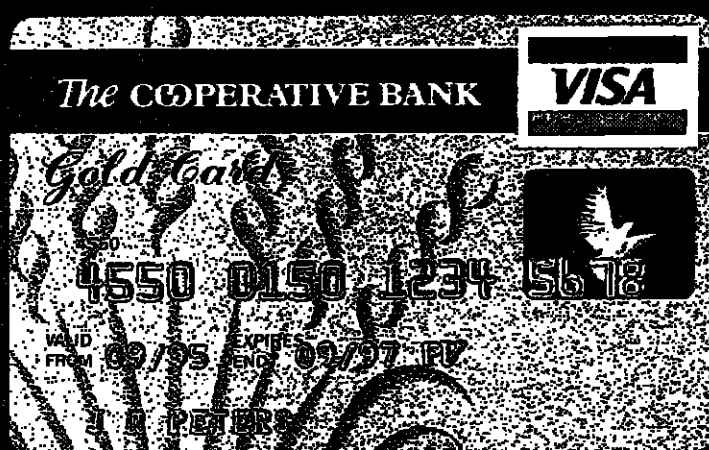
In 1991, the Church Commissioners fought off a legal challenge mounted by a group of clergymen headed by the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Rev Richard Harries, who wanted them to tighten their ethical investment policy. They maintained then that they had a duty in law to maximise profits. This was before the scale of their losses in property became clear.

When seven letters can spell supremacy



Board meeting: Competitors in the World Scrabble Championships at the Piccadilly Park Lane Hotel testing their word power in the early stages of the competition. Entrants from more than 30 countries are taking part in the event, which ends tomorrow. Photograph: Dillon Bryden

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Five jailed over child sex ring lose appeals

LOUISE JURY

Five men convicted in Britain's biggest trial for organised child sex abuse lost their appeals at the High Court yesterday but a sixth man walked free.

Breaches of child abuse guidelines laid down after the Cleveland scandal did not make the evidence so unreliable as to be unfair, the judges ruled.

But lawyers argued a flawed investigation and the unreliability of child witnesses made the convictions unsafe and unsatisfactory and said they would consider a further appeal.

The freed man, who cannot be named for legal reasons, joined in criticising social workers whom he claimed had prompted the allegations of a paedophile ring operating in Pembrokeshire, west Wales.

Speaking outside the High Court, he said: "I know they've got jobs to do, but why don't they do it properly? It's been hell. Half an hour ago I was the scum of the earth. Now I'm a human being again." He and four of the others were convicted at Swansea Crown Court last year of conspiracy to abuse.

The sixth man was cleared of conspiracy but found guilty of buggery with his two children. The men received sentences of between 5 and 15 years.

At the end of the trial, Ray White, Chief Constable of Dyfed-Powys, called the inquiry a "model of perfection". But the appeal heard claims, at least partly accepted by the Crown, of children coached before making video statements, "contamination" of evidence where the children were allowed to discuss the claims between themselves and confusion between therapy to help the children and investigation of their claims. However, Lord Justice Swinton Thomas, sitting with Mr Justice Waterhouse and Mr Justice Harrison, said it was up to the jury to decide whether children were telling the truth once it was established that they knew right from wrong and understood the questions.

The freed man was released after the judges ruled medical evidence concerning his two-year-old daughter should not have been permitted at the original trial. As the jury were likely to have relied on it, the

conviction was unsafe. But although some of the children's claims were "fantasy", there was evidence of adults bringing their children to group abuse sessions, the judges said. They were not persuaded the other convictions were unsafe.

Relatives of the unsuccessful appellants left the London courtroom in tears. The wife of one man, convicted of abusing two sons by his first marriage, said: "There's no such thing as British justice."

The stepfather of one of the men said: "This has been a con from start to finish. They're all covering each other's backs."

Paul Settatree, solicitor for one of the men, said: "This has resolved nothing. There have been lots of erudite legal points but justice has not been done. It hasn't looked at the question of the extent to which children are susceptible to suggestion."

Dewi Evans, Dyfed's director of social services, said the outcome was a vote of confidence for the department, although errors had been made. The child protection committee would examine refining procedures and improving training.

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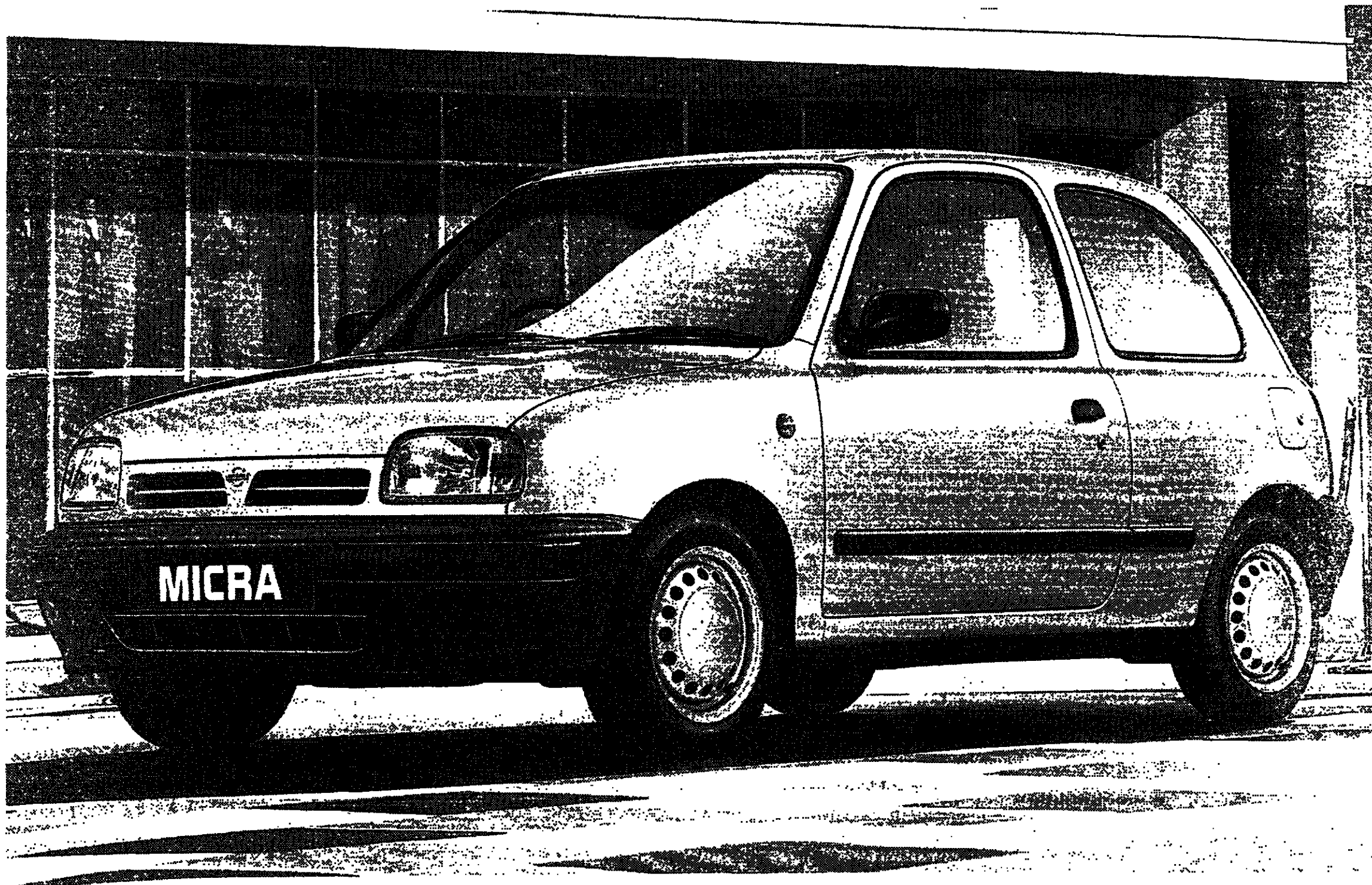
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Sexual equality at work 'may have net cost'

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

Billions of pounds are spent fighting discrimination against women but there is considerable doubt over the economic benefits, according to a controversial paper published yesterday by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

In a document which may undermine the commission's campaign to show that equal opportunities make "good business sense", an expert in the field argues that there may be a substantial "net cost" involved.

While there can be economic benefits from a family-friendly approach, there is uncertainty about the advantages of introducing policies beyond the already common flexi-time and part-time working.

Sally Holtmann, the author, implicitly warns against the recent commission strategy, fostered by Kamlesh Bahl, chairwoman of the EOC, of emphasising the business benefits of anti-discrimination policies.

"There is a danger of a shift in attitude towards the position where equality of opportunity is no longer seen primarily as a matter of social justice, desirable in its own right, but merely as something that can be pursued if, and only if, it coincides with the employing organisation's own self-interest."

Ms Holtmann says the introduction of minimal family-friendly policies can be a "disguise for employers acting in their own self-interests". Other arrangements, such as leave entitlements and childcare assistance, are much less common and pressure for them is meeting resistance from employers and government alike, according to the author.

While such opposition may exist because the benefit cannot readily be seen, it may be that informal assessments only have been made.

Ms Holtmann, writing in *The Economics of Equal Opportunities* published by the commission, says that where self-interest is not apparent the Government should enforce minimum standards. A briefing to accompany the book, published by the commission yesterday, concedes that traditional economics based on the analysis of the single company inevitably lead to questions about the commercial viability of enlightened policies. Authors of the book conclude that the case for equal opportunities rests largely on ethical grounds – a statement which calls into question the recent business-orientated policy of the commission.

The editors, Jane Humphries of the University of Cambridge and Jill Rubery of the University of Manchester, believe that the economic case for anti-discrimination policies becomes stronger if attention is switched away from the individual business to the economy as a whole.

In contrast with the more bullish statements from the commission, a briefing paper to accompany the book will only venture that the pursuit of equal opportunities is "not necessarily incompatible with economic efficiency".

The findings will provide ammunition for commission officials who have privately been expressing misgivings about the emphasis on business under the leadership of Ms Bahl. Some senior officials believe that the best argument for fighting discrimination is that it involves a basic human right.

Ms Bahl said that the book was not intended to provide all the answers; it was meant to stimulate debate. There were many large national companies for which equal opportunities were central to their employment policies. The TSB bank calculated that it had been losing £3m a year by not introducing a family-friendly system.

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Potted history: Comedian captivates young audience with TV satire on health-conscious fans of 'faffy' foods

Commercials turn quick snack into student cult

LOUISE JURY

In the canon of cult heroes, he is no Jim Morrison or James Dean. But in classrooms and on the campus, Terry the Pot Noodle promoter has a fan club.

Legions of teenagers are writing to demand signed pictures. "Gorgeous" is becoming a staple of the student lexicon. You may have dismissed Pot Noodles as a Seventies fad but the latest advertising campaign for the add-boiling-water quick snack has captivated the nation.

"It's very funny," said the comedian Peter Baynham, Terry's alter ego, yesterday. "I keep on getting calls from people saying, 'You're a postmodern cult'. I say, 'Oh, that's nice'."

It all began at the end of September when Terry hit prime-time television advertising. He and fellow Welshman John, played by Martin Ellis, see a poster promoting the fibre goodness of Pot Noodles and launch an attack on healthy sticks-and-leaves "faffy" food.

Faffy food eaters are idiots who look particularly idiotic when exercising. "Oh, I feel so fibrous," they say. The wise guys shovel Pot Noodles down like pigs. "How can Pot Noodle be faffy food? It's too gorgeous," they say. In the style of a home video, the snack is transformed into a scrumptious yet healthy treat. "I didn't know what to expect," Baynham said. "Then about three days after the first



Pot of gold: The TV advert that created a hero

Oasis ordered Pot Noodles to take on their American tour. It brings a smile to the face of Jeremy Woods, marketing manager of Instant Hot Snacks.

"A lot of people think it's a small niche brand which nobody eats, but Pot Noodle is the 25th largest food and drink brand in Britain. Currently worth £85m a year," he said.

In between answering fans' letters, he tried to explain the phenomenon. "The people who eat them eat a lot of them. Those people in the know love the product. Those people who don't, eat faffy foods."

Steven Huntley, 14, from Blytheethin near Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan is a chicken-and-mushroom flavour fan and he loves the commercials. "It's when they say the word 'gorgeous'." His father, David, confirmed: "Gorgeous is a saying round here now."

In Lampeter in Dyfed, six "Pot Noodle-obsessed" students – Claire, Nadia, Ann, Jane, Marie and Lou – have declared their home a shrine. "Before your heart-wrenching adverts entered deep into our home, our lives were a stirred existence of plain and tasteless slops," they wrote. "But now we can truthfully say we have changed our diet through the awakenings of the Pot Noodle and FIBRE!"

The current run of commercials has just ended but a new saga of Terry and John returns in January.



Moral fibre: Peter Baynham won new fans with his portrayal of Terry the noodle enthusiast Photograph: Edward Webb

Top award for hotel with whiff of scandal

JOHN MCKIE

It was the scene of the Profumo scandal in the Sixties and, more recently, the wedding of defence chief Sir Antony Buck to his last wife, Bienvenida.

Last year, it hit the headlines for banning film star Richard Gere when he turned up for dinner in black denim dungarees.

Yesterday, the Cliveden Hotel in Taplow, Berkshire, banished any hint of notoriety after winning the highest honour bestowed on its industry when the Egon Ronay guides voted it Hotel of the Year for 1995.

The hotel, a former residence of the Astor family, opened as a hotel 10 years ago and was praised by the Guide as "one of the finest, if not the finest, hotels in the country". It is, the guide added, "a unique building, meticulously restored and brilliantly converted to its present role".

The 1996 Egon Ronay's Cellnet Guide to Hotels & Restaurants also bestowed an honour upon one of the year's other success stories, Rick Stein, whose *Taste of the Sea* book has only just been knocked off the top of the bestsellers list by fellow TV chef Delia Smith, won Restaurant of the Year for his Seafood restaurant in Padstow, Cornwall.

The launch of the new guide also saw the launch of a campaign to ensure that no one eating in a restaurant is charged for tap water.

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Sources: Moneyfacts July 1995.

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Some of you may be sceptical, I know your not stupid, why should you believe me? There's been enough rip offs in the past (See chapter twelve "Miracle Cures"). Well, I am not asking you to believe me, not just yet. I would like you to try it, and if in a months time from now you still don't believe me, if you think I am ripping you off, or for any reason you are not 100% satisfied, send back "The Natural cure to Baldness" and I will return your cheque uncashed. How do you know I will? Well just to be on the safe side post-date your cheque for 2 months from today, that will give you plenty of time to receive it, look it over and try it out. Will you notice a difference in that time? The normal rate of hair growth is approximately 1cm (1/2inch) per month and I believe that by following the simple step by step instructions, you should see an improvement in as little as 3 weeks.

With massive advertising costs, I have to charge you £20 which is cheap compared with, other remedies which can cost you up

to £30 for just one months supply. Some treatments can run into 1000s of pounds. Where as you can use the information contained in "The Natural cure to Baldness" for the rest of your life and it will not cost you another penny.

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Mr. R. S. Torquay.

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Dear Mr. Tubb, I have just read your Book. You can cash the cheque now as you have put my mind at ease. Mr. S.S. Merseyside.

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international

Tigers at bay but still dangerous

Desperate Tamils are hurling children into the final battle for Jaffna, writes Tim McGirk

Colombo—After a fierce night battle against Tamil Tiger guerrillas, Sri Lankan soldiers dragged the bodies of their fallen enemies out of the rice paddies and examined them. To their shock, the soldiers found many of these feared Tamil warriors were only girls, some still children.

The Tamil Tigers are far from defeated, but have lost their aura of invincibility. The sinister, hulking figure of the Tamil guerrilla has been stripped away to reveal a young boy or girl, schooled in arms and martyrdom.

The Tamils may also be on the verge of losing their dream of an independent homeland, Eelam, on the northern tip of Sri Lanka, for which they have fought for almost 13 years. The Tamil Tiger chief, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, and his force of teenagers are unable to halt the assault by more than 25,000 government troops, backed by tanks and artillery, from pushing within three miles of Jaffna.

"What we are witnessing", one observer in Colombo said, "is kids having to take on the Sri Lankan army in a full-frontal war."

It is no longer a question of whether the army can conquer the rebel fortress town but when. The rebel chief is thought to be hiding in the jungles south of the Jaffna peninsula. Many of his Tigers are thought to have crossed the lagoons with Mr Prabhakaran and to have melted into the jungles.

Only a contingent of rebels has stayed to defend the empty city of Jaffna, and they are busy planting mines and boobytraps in abandoned houses to slow the army's advance by a few days. The capture of Jaffna, although of symbolic importance to the government, may cost it dear.

The dilemma that President Chandrika Kumaratunga faces is that once her forces have secured Jaffna, what will she do with an empty city? First, she must coax back Jaffna's Tamils. More than 400,000 refugees are huddled in temples, schools and coconut groves about 10 miles away, in Chavakachcheri. They are out of artillery range but are starved and soaked by monsoon rains.

Luring back the Tamils to Jaffna will not be easy, although the government forces have tried to avoid civilian casualties during this two-week



Rebel target: Sri Lanka army officers inspecting the wreckage of a fighter plane shot down by Tamils

Photograph: Reuters

offensive. According to official figures, only 50 civilians have been killed, compared with almost 226 soldiers and nearly 1,000 Tiger rebels.

But even those Tamils who yearn to return to their villages fear being seen as traitors. The Tiger doctrine is that "the mass exodus has clearly demonstrated the collective resentment and opposition of the Tamil people towards... the military takeover of Jaffna". The Tigers have so much support that it is difficult to find a Tamil family without a son or daughter fighting in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

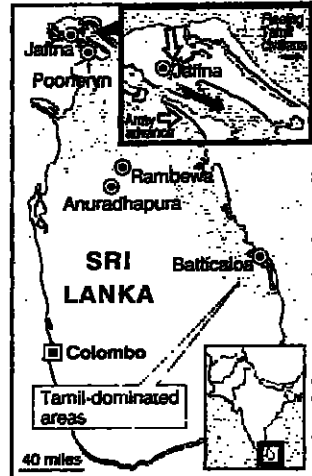
When civilians do drift back, Tigers will stalk into Jaffna with them and restart the guerrilla war.

Although Sri Lanka has an army larger than Britain's, it is not well equipped or powerful enough to guard the Jaffna peninsula against a guerrilla

campaign. "There's a danger the Sri Lankan Army will stretch itself too thin against the LTTE and become very vulnerable," an observer said.

Mrs Kumaratunga was elected President a year ago on a peace ticket, and her campaign posters showed her releasing doves into a heavenly blue sky. Since then she has become a warrior queen, and her popularity among the majority Sinhalese remains high. Western diplomats say that Mrs Kumaratunga tried to make peace with the Tigers, but the rebels were shamming.

A three-month cease-fire brokered earlier this year by Mrs Kumaratunga was used by the Tigers to rearm, train recruits and deploy on the eastern seaboard. On 19 April, Tiger suicide commandos blew up some navy vessels, signalling the truce was over. The President, whose party's ma-



majority in parliament depends on only one seat, was criticised by the opposition for being duped by the Tiger chief.

Mrs Kumaratunga, whose Colombo home is guarded against Tamil suicide bombers,

says she knows the Tigers' claws cannot be drawn completely. Her aim is to drag the rebels back to the negotiating table. While her army is hitting hard, Mrs Kumaratunga has unveiled plans to give the Tamils, a majority in the north and a sizeable presence in the east, control over their own land, schools and police.

The package may entice weary Tamils, but not the LTTE chiefs. Mr Prabhakaran has not budged from his demand for an independent Tamil state. Although he has been deprived of income from "revolutionary taxes" and school-ground recruits in Jaffna, the Tigers remain lethal. Even without Jaffna, the army of 10,000 Tigers can launch attacks on the peninsula, along the east coast and in Colombo.

Five children were massacred by Tiger rebels yesterday in a south-eastern village, almost

250 miles from the battle zone. Near Batticaloa, an eastern port, Tigers hacked to death several Sinhalese men last week. The Tigers loaded the dismembered bodies - "chopped like fish", one eyewitness said - on to a bullock cart that was sent creaking into a village with its awful cargo.

With slaughters such as these, the Tigers aim to draw troops from the siege of Jaffna. The Tigers, according to the government, may be trying to provoke the Sinhalese into taking revenge against Tamils in Colombo and elsewhere in the south, which the rebels would use as proof that no peace can be reached with the Sinhalese.

To guard against Tamil attacks, which might trigger ethnic riots, Colombo on Thursday ordered schools to close for three months. The capital is braced for terrorism. The war may come to Colombo.

Islamic exiles 'flocking to safe haven in London'

JASON BENNETTO

In the past year anti-terrorist officers and MI5 have warned of a likely increase in activities by Algerian terrorists in Britain.

Yesterday that fear was highlighted by reports that an Algerian Muslim extremist living in London had helped to organise the current bombing campaign in France. The man, named under his pseudonym of Abou Fares, is reported to be behind an extremist Islamic fundamentalist publication called *Al Ansar*, published in

London and distributed at mosques on Fridays throughout the capital. The magazine has called for the shooting of Westerners in Algeria, kidnapping and murder of government officials and the hijacking of aircraft. Fund-raising operations have been established in London since the early Eighties.

The police and MI5 have stepped up surveillance of Islamic radicals after strong protests from France and Algeria that London has become a haven for exiles plotting the assassination of intellectuals,

politicians and journalists in Algeria. *Al Ansar* ("The Partisan") calls for a holy war, and is thought to have links with Algeria's Armed Islamic Group (GIA). Jean-François Deniau, a former head of the French parliament's foreign affairs committee, said yesterday that London played a key role in financing Muslim groups. "Financially it is always the centre. In the Muslim world, the countries with the cash are the anglophone ones," he said.

On Tuesday, Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary,

denied that London had become a haven for Islamic fundamentalist guerrillas.

Since the early Eighties Muslim groups from Afghanistan have had contacts and fund-raisers among the Muslim community in Britain. There is also evidence to suggest money from this country has been channelled to Islamic fundamentalist groups operating in Egypt. The Algerian government claims that because Britain's asylum laws do not prohibit political activity as long as it does not break British law,

dissident exiles are flocking to London to take advantage of the good communications and large number of Arab newspapers published here. A network offers accommodation, money and legal advice.

The GIA wants France, the former colonial power, to end its support for Algeria's military-backed authorities, who cancelled a 1992 election which Muslim fundamentalists were poised to win. About 50,000 people have subsequently died in the fighting. The GIA has demanded that France end

economic aid, estimated at 5bn francs (£640m) a year.

In a television interview last week, President Jacques Chirac for the first time linked French economic aid to Algeria to progress made towards democracy. The French government has repeatedly stated its neutrality in Algeria's presidential election late this month, but has banned all demonstrations linked to the election, and has restricted on security grounds the number of days on which Algerians living in France can cast their votes.

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PM relieves burden of ailing Yeltsin

HELEN WOMACK
Moscow

Russia's Prime Minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, yesterday said Boris Yeltsin needed support to recover from his second heart attack in four months and therefore he would step in to co-ordinate the work of four key ministers who normally report directly to the President.

Although Mr Chernomyrdin said his boss was getting better and said his advice would be sought before important decisions were taken, the news of the partial transfer of responsibility was certain to provoke fresh speculation about the Kremlin leader's health and his chances of remaining in power.

A brief appearance by Mr Yeltsin, 64, on television, his first since he went into hospital last week, did little to inspire confidence. Shown sitting almost motionless in a chair opposite Mr Chernomyrdin, the President slurred as he said: "Subjectively I feel not bad. The recovery's going according to plan. There are no fears now."

Mr Chernomyrdin, who was allowed a 30-minute meeting with Mr Yeltsin in Moscow's Central Clinic, suggested that the President's relapse might have happened because he went back to work too quickly after his first heart attack in July.

"I think the President just needs to complete his course of treatment and everything will be all right," he said.

He even went on to suggest Mr Yeltsin might still run in presidential elections due next June.

"The Russian President will soon be fit and his participation in the next presidential elections



Talking heads: Mr Chernomyrdin chatting with Mr Yeltsin during the Prime Minister's meeting with the President in Moscow's Central Clinic

is a matter of technicalities," he said.

But for the time being, Mr Yeltsin must rest. And so Mr Chernomyrdin will co-ordinate the work of the foreign, defence, security and interior ministers.

"The President has to be partially relieved of these duties to give him a better chance to recover," he said.

"But of course we seek the President's advice on all key questions."

The four "power ministers" are heavily burdened, with the Foreign Minister striving to raise Russia's profile in international affairs, especially the search for peace in Bosnia, and the other ministers bogged

down in the Chechnya crisis. Reporters asked if Mr Yeltsin had himself thought of being relieved of the responsibility of making sure they work smoothly together.

"I could see in his eyes that

Chernomyrdin should work harder," the Prime Minister replied.

Most of Mr Yeltsin's Communist and nationalist opponents are maintaining a tactful silence, aware that they could

damage their chances in December's parliamentary elections by being seen to kick a man when he is down.

But yesterday Yuri Skokov, who is in alliance with the nationalist retired army general Alexander Lebed, voiced what they were all thinking. Mr Yeltsin had "failed as a president" and "exhausted his abilities in the post" but his "ego" prevented him from admitting this, Mr Skokov said.

However, support for Mr Yeltsin came from the head of the Forward Russia movement, the market reformer Boris Fyodorov.

It was too early to write Mr Yeltsin off, he said, condemning government officials for "leaving the ship even before it has started to sink."

In the absence of detailed medical bulletins, it is difficult to assess Mr Yeltsin's true condition and future prospects. All that can be said for certain is that his illness has greatly complicated the political picture in the run-up to the elections.

The race for parliament, seen as a test-run before the presidential election, was almost certainly one of the main topics of discussion between Mr Yeltsin and Mr Chernomyrdin. The Kremlin leader made clear earlier in the week that he was concerned about election officials barring a number of parties from taking part on technical grounds.

Yesterday the Supreme Court ruled that the Dzerzhava (great power) movement of the former vice-president Alexander Rutskoi should be reinstated.

A similar verdict was widely expected in the case of the liberal Yabloko bloc.

IN BRIEF

Democracy rules SA

Johannesburg — President Nelson Mandela declared South Africa a democracy "in the complete sense of the word" after a strong showing by his African National Congress in the nation's first all-race democratic local elections. Partial results showed the ANC winning control of most of the nearly 700 local and rural councils up for election. AP

Arms blast kills 3

Buenos Aires — At least three people were killed and 200 injured when an arms factory exploded in the Argentine town of Rio Tercero, 60 miles south of the city of Cordoba. Reuters

Election wrangle

Dar es Salaam — Tanzania's High Court rejected an opposition petition to bar publication of results from last Sunday's parliamentary and presidential elections. A further hearing on opposition demands for the suspension of repeat elections in the capital, will be heard on Monday. Reuters

Poets called to Iraq

Jerusalem — Iraq has invited a number of Israeli Arab poets to take part in a poetry festival in Baghdad beginning later this month. *Kol al-Arab*, an Israeli Arabic weekly, published a copy of an invitation sent by the Iraqi Minister of Culture and Information to its chief editor, the poet Samih al-Qassem. Reuters

Troops kill rebels

Bujumbura — Burundian troops killed 11 suspected Hutu rebels near the capital when a group of 20 people, some armed, was ambushed as they tried to infiltrate the northern suburb of Kinama. Aid officials said up to 3,000 people had fled from their homes during the clashes this week. Reuters

Guerrillas defect

Phnom Penh — More than 300 Khmer Rouge guerrillas in north-western Cambodia have defected to join government forces, said Norodom Ranariddh, one of the country's two joint prime ministers. Four senior officers were said to be among the defectors. AP

Wildlife off menu

Peking — A province in south China has closed down 19 hotels and restaurants for serving up wildlife. In official raids, more than 6,000 wild animals were found — 3,220 of which are state protected. Reuters

'Punk' writer divides China's literary salons

Peking — In China's literary salons of the 1930s, rival writers wrangled over the relationship between art and politics, against the backdrop of a civil war. Sixty years later, with China gripped by cut-throat commercialism, a number of the country's literary are engaged in a very public spat over "punk" writing, "too clever" authors and the demise of "idealism" in popular Chinese literature.

Since the argument started, writers, critics and scholars have vented their fury in literary journals and newspapers. They have insulted each other's motives, ethics and writing, quoting anyone from Socrates to Confucius. They accuse each other of being either shamelessly commercial or naively attached to outmoded ideals.

But behind the spleen and erudition is a deep-rooted disagreement over the role of literature in a fast-changing society where old values have quickly been undermined by a

The Too-Clever faction takes on the Not-So-Clever in a battle for a nation's soul, says Teresa Poole

new individualism and cynicism, especially among the young. Membership of the two groups cannot be categorised by age or by political colour; nor is the debate a political campaign, as literary criticism so often has been in China's past. The argument "is quite different from anything that has been seen in the last 40 years", said *China Focus*, published by the Princeton China Initiative.

In the "pragmatist" corner is a group of writers and critics, including Wang Meng, a former Minister of Culture, and in the opposition camp is Professor Xie Mian of Peking University and authors including Zhang Chengzhi and the critic Wang Binbin. The dispute was kindled by the two groups' very different reactions to a young "punk" writer, Wang Shuo, whose books are peopled by a new generation of disillusioned and alienated Peking youth. Written

in raw local slang, Wang Shuo's stories have proved extremely popular with China's young readers. To his detractors' annoyance, they also have been very successful commercially.

Zhang Chengzhi, however, was not impressed. He and others quickly accused Wang Shuo of "vulgar" writing symptomatic of declining moral standards, and of publishing with an eye on sales figures rather than with responsibility towards society. Wang Meng criticised the critics for lack of tolerance. For some it was a matter of freedom of expression. One elderly writer, who was persecuted in past political campaigns, said: "We should let the young writers try their ways. If the work is justified it will last; if it is not, it will peter out. I do not agree with attacking young writers."

In late 1994, the critic Wang Binbin fuelled the debate by publishing an article, *Chinese*

Writers who are Too Clever by Half. He alleged that "too clever" writers, such as Wang Meng and Xiao Qian, were working within the Communist system with the aim of producing work that did well in the new market economy. Wang Meng hit back, sneering at Wang Binbin for seeking the spotlight by attacking famous writers, and at critics for misunderstanding Wang Shuo's motives.

The ideological battle gained weight this year when, in the spring, Professor Xie Mian hosted seminars at Peking University on "literature and idealism" which attacked both Wang Shuo's writing and also the Wang Meng grouping. The seminar's protagonists argued that literature should present admirable ideals and be a constructive force in society; the participants subscribe to a style of humanism, which they say is being lost amid China's

reforms. Such humanists want less emphasis on the market economy, hanker after a clear, old-fashioned value system and resent writers who ply their craft for commercial motives.

Wang Meng's argument has been that China never did embrace a true humanism — "so how can we lose it if we never possessed it?" — and that, often, such "lofty" ideals turn out to

be a sham, as was the case in the Cultural Revolution.

Moral standards have not declined, Wang Meng said, unless one adopts an unrealistic view of morality in pre-reform Communist China. "Our target is not to establish a society where everybody is a selfless gentleman, but to build a rather regulated world where every person can enjoy a fair chance

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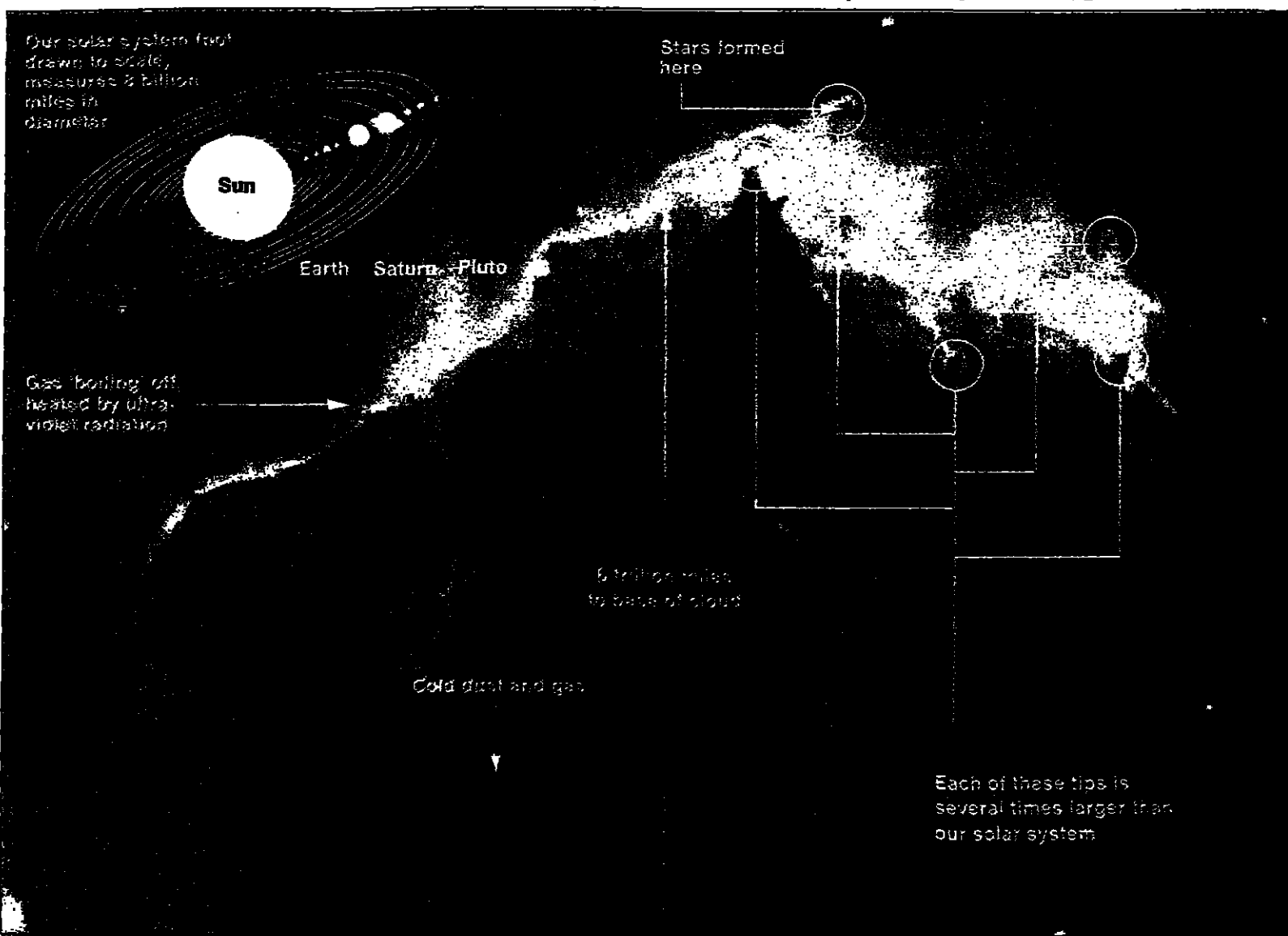
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Birth of a star: 42 million billion miles away and 7,000 years ago, the answers to cosmic mysteries are blowing in the wind



TOM WILKIE
Science Editor

In the constellation of Serpens, more than 42 million billion miles away, an interstellar hurricane is tearing apart a vast cloud known as the Eagle nebula. As the dust and gas disperse, they have revealed to the watchful eye of the Hubble space telescope the birth pangs of newborn stars.

The telescope's Wide Field and Planetary Camera has caught a striking image of vast columns of cool gas and dust reaching out from a cloud of hydrogen, like stalagmites from the floor of a cave. The gas inside the columns is dense enough to collapse under its own weight, forming young stars which continue to grow as they accumulate more material from their surroundings.

Released this week, the photographs capture events that took place 7,000 years ago, more than 1,000 years before the first Pharaoh ascended the

Hubble sees stars fighting to be born

throne of Egypt. Although light is the fastest thing in the universe, it has taken 7,000 years to cross the void between the nebula and the earth.

But astronomers are excited by more than just the beauty of the image, for it reveals hitherto unknown factors in the process of star formation which they had thought they understood. The stars from the Eagle nebula may be stunted from malnutrition.

The "wind" blowing across the Eagle nebula is actually a torrent of ultraviolet light from nearby young hot stars, heating the gas along the surface of the columns and boiling it off into space. The ghostly streamers flowing away from the columns in the picture are flows of this "photoevaporating" gas.

Not all the gas evaporates at the same rate, and as the outer layers disperse they reveal the denser globules within which the new stars are forming.

Jeff Hester of Arizona State University, whose team took the images, said "It's a bit like a wind storm in the desert. As the wind blows away the lighter sand, heavier rocks are uncovered. But instead of rocks, the ultraviolet light is uncovering the egg-like globules of gas that surround stars that were forming inside the gigantic gas columns."

Some of these "eggs" appear just as tiny bumps on the surface of the column or, if they have been uncovered, more fully as fingers of gas protruding from the larger cloud.

This is the first time we have actually seen the process of forming stars being uncovered

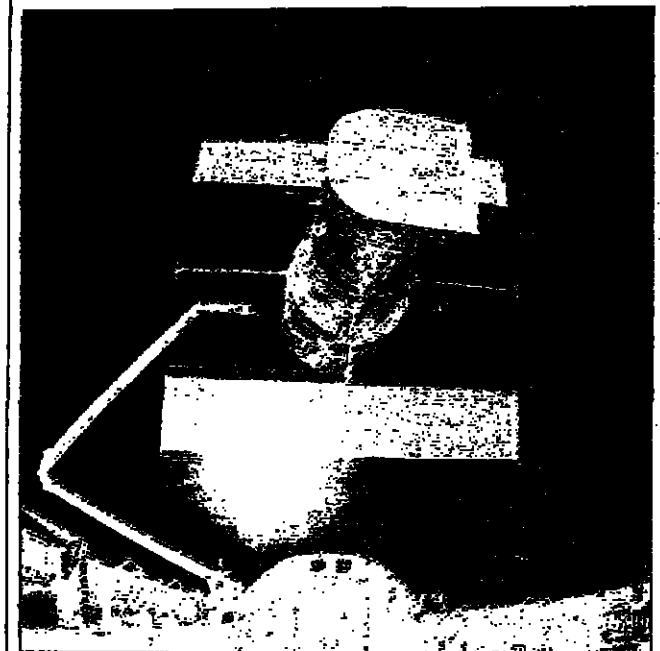
by photoevaporation," Dr Hester said. "In some ways, it seems more like archaeology than astronomy. The ultraviolet light from the nearby stars does the digging for us, and we study what is unearthed."

Eventually, the process of photoevaporation, by boiling off the gas, deprives the growing stars of the material from which they "feed". "We believe that the stars were continuing to grow as more and more gas fell onto them," Dr Hester said, but the process was cut short as the cloud of gas was dispersed.

Some astronomers believe that, left to its own devices, a star will continue to grow until it nears the point where nuclear fusion begins in its interior. When this happens, the star itself begins to blow a strong wind that clears away the residual material. The Eagle nebula is the first instance where they have seen an external wind blowing.

Sadly, however, the Hubble astronomers believe that photoevaporation may not only stunt the growth of the newborn stars, it may inhibit the formation of planets round such stars. It is not yet clear if these stars in the Eagle nebula have formed the discs that go on to become solar systems. According to Dr Hester, "if these discs haven't formed yet, they never will."

For astronomers, the Hubble space telescope's images of the Eagle nebula simply bear out that Bob Dylan was right: for the basic questions of star birth and the formation of planets "the answer, my friends, is blowing in the wind".



Watchful eye: Expectations were dashed when Nasa realised that Hubble was out of focus. Photograph: AFP

Superscope with specs lives up to the hype

The Hubble space telescope blasted off from Cape Canaveral in clouds of stupendous hype on 24 April 1990, writes Tom Wilkie.

The expectation was that this enormous satellite, the size of a double-decker bus, would reach out to see the edge of the universe and even find planets, capable of supporting life, circling other stars. Costing \$1.5bn, and orbiting 600 kilometres above the earth, it was clear of the distorting murky atmosphere through which ground-based telescopes peer.

But these expectations were dashed when it was realised that it was out of focus. It could barely take decent pictures of the planets in our own solar system. Subsequently, it emerged that military secrecy had restricted Nasa's ability to oversee the critical work of constructing the primary light-gathering mirror. The manufacturer, Perkin-Elmer, had been given the contract because it had experience in making components for military

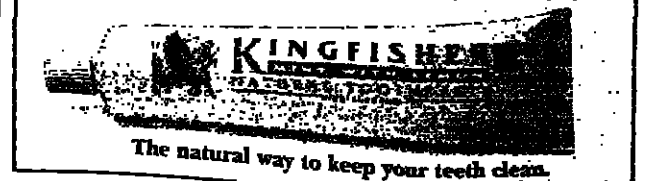
spy satellites. But because of its military connections, the plant was off-limits to all but a few Nasa staff. In the end, the curvature of the mirror, 94.5 inches across, was wrong by about one-fiftieth of the diameter of a human hair.

On 2 December 1993, Nasa launched a rescue mission, in effect to fit the instrument with a pair of spectacles. It was completely successful. Hubble was able to "see" with the precision its designers had originally intended and the scientific results started to flow.

Among the discoveries is the detection of primordial helium, the second lightest of all the chemical elements, created at least 13 billion years ago, close to the birth of the universe.

But some of the results have puzzled rather than clarified astronomers' understanding of the early days of the universe. Some suggest it could be half the age that had been thought — eight billion years rather than the conventional value of 15 to 16 billion.

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A wily Shevardnadze holds all the poll aces

PHIL REEVES
Tbilisi

As he sat behind his desk, in the full uniform of a Russian major-general, Panteleimon Giorgadze was in a remarkably combative mood for a man starting defeat in the face. He leant forward and began to tick off each point on his fingers. "Our laws are not obeyed," he said, his voice filling the gloomy wood-panelled flat that passes for his party headquarters. "We have no communications. We don't make anything. Even the bread we sell on the streets is from Turkey. How can anyone say Georgia is doing well?"

At 70, General Giorgadze, a former KGB officer, has embarked on one of the least promising campaigns of his career: he is one of five candidates challenging Eduard Shevardnadze for leadership of Georgia in tomorrow's presidential and parliamentary elections.

Although his United Communist Party of Georgia has 150,000 members, he knows he has little chance. Polls show Mr Shevardnadze, the former Soviet foreign minister, is likely to be re-elected for a second term. So General Giorgadze spends his time attacking his rival's image, favoured by the

West as a political miracle-worker.

"In Soviet times, I was paid a pension, enough to live on for a month. Now I get seven lari (23.30) a month... I used to travel to Moscow and Kiev to see my relatives. Now it would take me 27 years to earn the air fare. Yet Shevardnadze says everything's wonderful. Why do people like him?"

Rhetoric it may be, but he has a point. The nearly three years that have elapsed since Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Georgia's first post-Soviet leader, was expelled in the coup which ushered in Mr Shevardnadze have been turbulent and bloody. Georgia has lost control of Abkhazia to ethnic separatists; living standards are dismal; the economy is in a shambles. Yet Mr Shevardnadze's star continues to shine.

His popularity grew after he was nearly killed by a bomb in August. The government blamed his former head of security — General Giorgadze's son — for the attack, aided by reactionaries in the Russian security forces. Whether true or not, Mr Shevardnadze seized the opportunity to hurl 250 people in jail, including members of the Mkhedrioni (Horsemen), a militia which he initially used to secure power, but which quickly ran out of control.



Stuffed protest: An anti-government demonstrator in Tbilisi is restrained by a masked security man

Georgians frequently say they have little choice in their leader. Mr Shevardnadze seized the opportunity to hurl 250 people in jail, including members of the Mkhedrioni (Horsemen), a militia which he initially used to secure power, but which quickly ran out of control.

privatisation have gone down well, and could a free tomorrow's election to a run-off. But he lacks Mr Shevardnadze's international stature. This week a delegation from the White House, the US State Department and the Pentagon

swept into Tbilisi to support the Georgian leader. The US is keenly aware of the strategic importance of Georgia as a buffer against Russia's future expansion and as a route for the rich oil resources of Azerbaijan. Mr Shevardnadze also has

the simple advantage of power. Last winter there was so little electricity in Tbilisi that people burnt furniture. Now the power is on longer, although still never all day. In a more calculated move, Mr Shevardnadze has announced a big pay rise for



Shevardnadze: Has the simple advantage of power

government employees, a winning gambit in a country where many get less than \$10 a month.

And although candidates have enjoyed equal time on state television, his craggy features dominate the news bulletins. For the most part, the campaign has appeared clean so far, although there have been a handful of disturbing incidents, suggesting the Georgian security forces have yet to be weaned off all their KGB-style habits. Attempts to hold rallies by supporters of Mr Gamsakhurdia (who committed suicide in mysterious circumstances last year) have been stamped out by the police.

The security services also have reportedly seized their

literature, which called for an election boycott.

For the poll to be valid, turnout must exceed 50 per cent, or there will be a rerun. This may explain rumours of official threats that anyone who fails to vote will be jailed.

General Giorgadze, who will have seen plenty of skulduggery in his KGB years, is suitably outraged. He claims to have received death-threats and says that he is being followed around by thugs in cars.

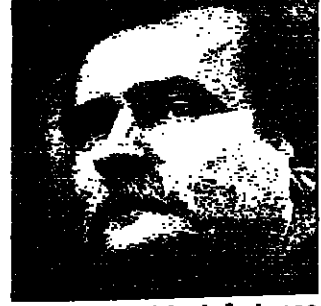
"That's why I wear this uniform. I want them to know who it is, if they shoot me," General Giorgadze said. But this Mr Shevardnadze, he added, why does everyone in the West think he is so wonderful?

Polish election down to clash of old enemies

ADRIAN BRIDGE
Warsaw

The 13 candidates in tomorrow's Polish presidential election closed their campaigns yesterday as a poll confirmed it had come down to a two-man race. The poll, in *Rzeczpospolita* newspaper, said Aleksander Kwasniewski, the former Communist leader of the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), looked set to clinch 32 per cent of the vote, followed by President Lech Walesa on 29 per cent.

None of the other hopefuls,



Walesa: Political fortunes have been resurrected

including Jacek Kuron, the veteran dissident, and Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, head of the central bank, looked likely to secure more than 10 per cent.

As all but the first two candidates will be eliminated after tomorrow's vote, the second round on 19 November looks set to be a confrontation between Mr Kwasniewski and his old adversary, Mr Walesa.

For many voters, the campaign has come down to a choice between the heirs of the old Communist regime — in the form of Mr Kwasniewski — and those of the Solidarity

movement that toppled it, embodied by Mr Walesa, the union's founder and former leader. The perceived clash between the two traditions and ideologies has taken precedence over serious discussion about key issues facing the country, such as how to proceed with economic reform and how to define the role of the Catholic Church.

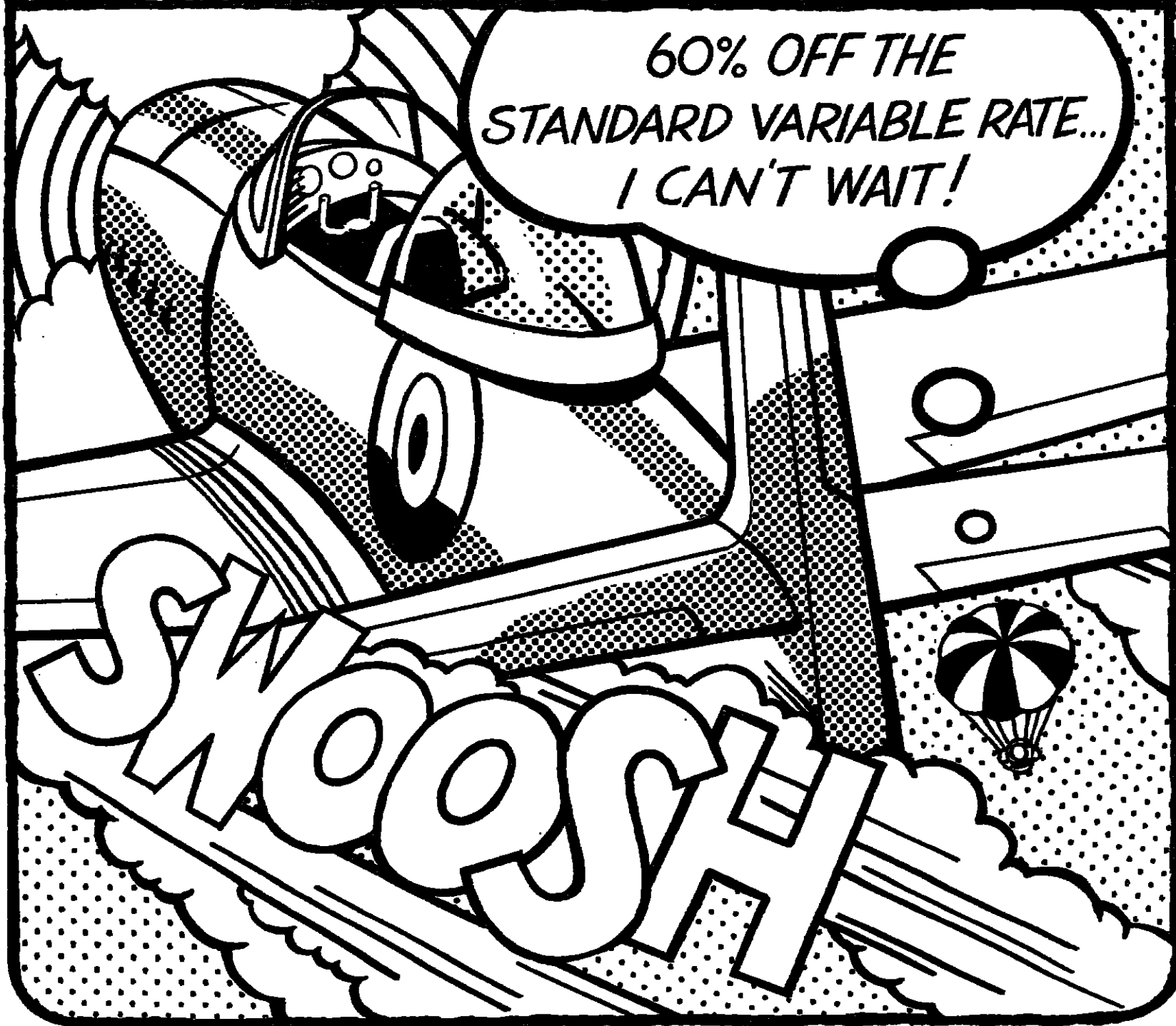
For Mr Walesa, who was trailing Mrs Gronkiewicz-Waltz and Mr Kuron in polls earlier this year, the reduction of the campaign to a rerun of the battles of the 1980s has resurrected his political fortunes.

For Mr Kwasniewski, whose party dominates the ruling coalition, it could be fatal. Though he is seen as more educated, able and professional than his rival, most people believe his being a minister in the last Communist administration will weigh more heavily with voters than all his protestations of being a genuinely reformed social democrat.

In his first five-year term, Mr Walesa's abrasive style alienated him from most of his former Solidarity allies, including Mr Kuron, who, despite impeccable dissident credentials, has had a disappointing campaign. He described the likely showdown between Mr Walesa and Mr Kwasniewski as "one hell of an alternative" and urged voters not to let it come down to a choice of the "lesser of two evils". But if it does, Mr Walesa, for all his faults, is still seen as the man best able to prevent too much power returning to the ex-Communists. As many in Warsaw are saying, it could well be a case of better the devil you know.

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66 die as the Philippines feels super-typhoon Angela's fury

Manila (Reuters) — Super-typhoon Angela, the most powerful storm to hit the Philippines for years, yesterday killed 66 people, had 200,000 fleeing their homes and left millions without power.

"This is the worst beating we have had," the Catanduanes governor, Severo Alcantara, said before communications with the island were severed, apart from ham radio links. Catanduanes, 220 miles east of Manila, was the first to feel Angela's fury.

Up to 500 miles in diameter and with winds gusting up to 155mph, Angela then scythed across Luzon, the most heavily populated island in the Philippines, a nation of 65 million people.

Initial estimates put damage to property and crops at more than 1.2 bn pesos (£20m). President Fidel Ramos, taking personal charge of relief efforts in Manila, said: "Saving lives and reducing damage is the main event at this particular time." The normally congested capital turned into a ghost town as its 8.5 million people cowered indoors.



Heavy blow: Manila residents try to cross a bridge in the face of ferocious winds caused by Angela

Photograph: Pat Roque/AP

Argentina sends Nazi to stand trial in Italy

PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

Erich Priebke lived for almost half a century as a respected hotelier in the Andean ski resort of San Carlos de Bariloche, welcoming American tourists with his German-accented Spanish and going to Mass on Sundays. He travelled regularly, including to Germany and Italy, using a passport in his own name renewed several times by the West German embassy in Buenos Aires.

His fellow Germans in the local community, some Argentinians and even a few local Jews knew he had been a Nazi SS officer, but he was by no means the only one in Argentina. They even got together in Bariloche to celebrate Hitler's birthday.

When a team from the US television station ABC tracked him down in 1993, he had no qualms about admitting that as a 31-year-old SS captain in the Nazi occupation force, he had taken part in the massacre of 335 Italian men and boys, including more than 70 Jews, in the Ardeatine caves outside Rome on 24 March 1944. After all, it was a long time ago, he was "small fry" and was only following orders, he said.

The US broadcast, however, outraged Jews and led to his house arrest in May last year in the resort more than 1,000 miles south-west of Buenos Aires, where locals described him as a good neighbour and a pillar of the community. After a series of court rulings and appeals, Argentina's Supreme Court on Thursday ordered his extradition to Italy to stand trial for crimes against humanity. It could be the most emotional war crimes trial in decades; elderly Italians still remember the day their relatives were rounded up and led away to the caves.

A group of Italian resistance fighters had blown up a German army lorry on the night of 23 March 1944, killing 33 soldiers. Adhering to Hitler's ruling on reprisals, Lieutenant-Colonel Herbert Kappler and Captain Priebke, his aide, rounded up 10 Italian men or boys for every German soldier killed. By the time they reached 330, they were not sure of their count. So they added five more to be on the safe side, according to historical accounts.

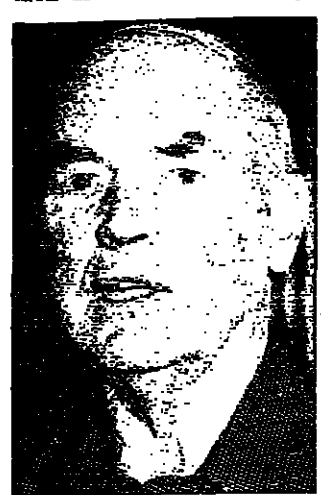
In interviews since, and in a book, Priebke admitted killing at least one of the victims himself as an incentive to his men.

Kneeling in the damp caves, with their hands bound behind their backs, each was killed with a single shot to the neck.

"We wanted to oppose it but we had to obey or we would join the list of those who were shot," Priebke said during his house arrest. "It was horrendous. We couldn't understand how a German could do something like that, but Kappler was inflexible."

Kappler was convicted after the war and spent more than 30 years in Italian prisons until he escaped from a military hospital in 1977, fled to Austria and died there.

The Priebke case had shone an unwelcome spotlight on Argentina as something of a retirement home for former Nazis, initially aided by the then dictator Juan Domingo



Priebke: Admits his part in massacre of 335 in Rome

Peron, in a lucrative trade in false visas and identity documents, and later protected by Argentine military officers. The infamous "Angel of Death", Joseph Mengele, lived for more than a decade in Argentina. So did Adolf Eichmann, architect of the "Final Solution", until Israeli commandos kidnapped him in 1960 and smuggled him to Israel, where he was tried, convicted and hanged.

Priebke himself confirmed what many historians had written: that the Vatican and the International Red Cross were key links in a chain that helped ex-Nazi flee and settle in South America. After he escaped from a British prison camp at Rimini in Italy in 1948, the Red Cross had provided him, his wife and two children with passports, he said.

Priebke is expected to be sent to Italy within a few weeks.



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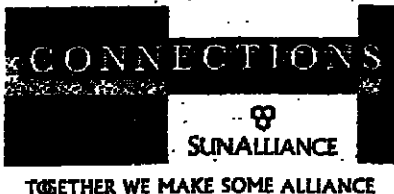
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هناك ان الاصل

Parliament enters the moral maze and cannot see a way out

This week a group of Tory MPs has flocked to a dear old barricade against that implacable enemy – the permissive society. In the name of the family, they killed Lord Mackay's domestic violence Bill and took aim at his divorce reforms. Meanwhile, with equal vigour, they fought off attempts to clean up their own act. To most Tories, Lord Nolan's demand that they register all income derived from their positions as MPs is as unpalatable as orange juice at a parliamentary cocktail party. Next week, they are pledged to throw it out of the Commons.

It is doubtful whether the public is much impressed by our legislators' public ruminations about issues like marriage and divorce. Why should the intervention of these largely middle-aged, mostly male, not infrequently divorced politicians working long hours in an antiquated atmosphere carry great weight in the ordering of our personal lives? Most people wanting to hear something sensible about relationships would be better off with an agony aunt.

Nevertheless, it is plain that we are lodged in a serious phase of parliamentary moral breast-beating. This is partly caused by the intensifying conflict between the parties as the election approaches. Mr Blair sees commitment to solid, old-fashioned family values as a way of promising voters a reprieve from the insecurities of the age and, more pragmatically, as a means of securing his hold on the centre ground of politics. The Conservatives' desperation to resist this incursion tempts them, not for the first time, towards a rightward drift, challenging Mr Blair to wander further into the woods of social conservatism. Per-



haps, just perhaps, he will get lost there and be knocked on the head by a mugger or out-of-work squeegee merchant.

There are also more underlying causes for this anti-liberal swing. Many people genuinely regret the demise of old moral certainties that have disappeared with the waning power of the churches, political leaders, teachers and other traditional authorities. The choices many of us make in life are all too often accompanied by trauma, emotion and guilt. Right-wing Tory MPs sense that a burst of fundamentalism stands a chance of making us all feel better. It is little wonder that a number of Conservatives have been drawn into the Roman Catholic church, which has made so few concessions to liberalism.

But most of us also know that this is essentially nostalgia for a golden age. We may regret that our brother or sister or mother or father or best friend is divorced, we may have acute concerns for the children and be anxious to provide support, but we do not any longer think we can change the way things are. The forces that have broken down the old patterns are more powerful than that and it is political self-delusion to think that they are really much to do with the workings of the welfare state.

The high divorce rate is in reality impervious to the hectoring of politicians. Nor is it likely to fall if marriage attracts, as some advocate, extra tax advantages. Divorce involves great losses in terms of income, friends, children and homes. But once a marriage has failed those involved, especially the women, still press ahead with separation whatever the cost.

This freedom of choice does not, as some Tory MPs might argue, mean that we have become an amoral society. Quite the opposite. This is a highly moral age. Multiplicity of choice can make us pragmatic, expedient and selfish. But it also forces us to generate and frame our own moral codes, instead of, as in the past, passively adopting a set of principles handed down from above. Do we really think that we or those around us are less sensitive today than we were one or two decades ago about the conduct of personal relationships, violence, honesty, discrimination, not to mention the new moral complexities that arise from advances in genetics and other medical technologies?

There are many sources for the pick'n'mix morality we all use to tackle these questions. The churches used to be like giant conglomerates supplying everything needed. But today a different array of voices challenges us. Pressure groups and charities make their arguments about pollution, animal welfare and poverty in the Third World. Feminism has redrawn the force-field around relations between men and women. Soap operas, *Albany*, *Richard and Judy*, *Oprah* all confront viewers with tricky issues. It may be more difficult to know what you think, but there is plenty of thinking going on. The biggest danger is that it all comes to seem so complex that the individual feels powerless to make a difference. That should be a prime point of entry for the politicians, but it won't happen if the politicians we encounter are not describing the world as we know it to be.

Greater individualism has not produced anarchy, just complexity and a great deal of personal agonising. It is compatible with a well-function-

ing mass society, just as the millions of different preferences expressed by consumerism are consistent with a modern, efficient economy. Despite the development of individualised morality, there remains enough of a common culture to keep society functioning. We no more need Parliament to make us stay married than we need it to run a command economy.

So what is the role of politics in the realm of morality? This week, right-wing Tory MPs seemed to be bidding for territory vacated by the bishops. Even though the churches, including the Roman Catholics, had endorsed Lord Mackay's divorce reforms, they took it upon themselves to lay waste his proposals. This is not helpful. Politicians need to show some humility on matters of personal morality. They should remember why John Major's "back to basics" campaign foundered in the most garish tabloid newspaper headlines.

They should also think very hard before they say no to Nolan. A long series of incidents has convinced many voters that Britain's legislators are unprincipled and open to corruption. A very large amount of this is unfair but it has to be faced: these days ministers are trusted even less than journalists. Lord Nolan recommended that the sources of MPs' incomes should be made transparent. His purpose was to restore their credibility and prove that members of parliament have nothing to hide. Even those MPs who do not like the rules in detail should recognise that Nolan has offered them a stepping-stone back to the kind of firm ground politics needs if it is to be healthy, vigorous and relevant.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Regional press threatened

From Mr Chris Oakley and others

Sir: The Government's Broadcasting Bill will be published this month. We fear that the Bill is to be based on an out-moded view of the regional newspaper industry. It will block the industry's natural development into regionally based media companies by preventing regional and local newspapers from owning radio and television stations within their circulation areas.

Few, if any, regions are now served by only one newspaper and one broadcaster. The allegation that local newspapers are regional monopolists is simply not supported by the evidence. We are in increasing competition for readers and advertisers with national newspapers, magazines and other print media, with the BBC and commercial broadcasters, with cable, with direct mail and the new electronic media.

The Bill is likely to allow our competitors, including national newspapers, whose sales might outnumber our own in a particular licence area, to buy a local radio or television station, which we would be prevented from owning. This would undermine regional newspapers, which would be barred

from competition, ultimately resulting in the loss of the comprehensive regional editorial and commercial services that they have traditionally provided for their local communities. The regional plurality that the Government is concerned to preserve will ultimately be lost.

We hope that the Government will revise its proposals in order to maintain a level playing-field to enable our companies to compete fairly, within local markets, with all other media, including national newspapers. The Government's Broadcasting Bill must not bar unfairly the regional newspaper company from being part of the new information age.

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS OAKLEY (Group Chief Executive, Midland Independent Newspapers plc); FREDDY JOHNSTON (Chairman Johnston Press plc, Edinburgh); ROBIN BURGESS (Managing Director, CN Group, Carlisle); PHILIP GRAF (Chief Executive, Trinity International Holdings plc, Chester); RAY TINDLE (Chairman, Tindle Newspapers Ltd, Farnham)
The Newspaper Society
London, WC1
2 November

The struggles of signing on

From Mr L. A. Channon

Sir: Cofin Campbell (letter, 28 October) does not tell the whole story about what it used to be like signing on. In the Fifties, I well remember being sent for a job interview before even being allowed to register for unemployment. Three hours of queuing was common.

After registration at the Labour Exchange came the ordeal of the National Assistance Board. Another wait of probably three hours for an interview, followed by another wait as your individual case was assessed by "The Panel". When told at the NAB that you would receive supplementary benefit, you went home.

There would be a card in the post next day to inform you an officer of the Board would be calling to interview you at home – the inference was to spy on you.

Applicants were often treated harshly. I myself heard

one man who lived eight miles from the NAB being told to sell his car and not bother the Board unless he could prove poverty. I also knew of individuals told to sell televisions, washing machines, etc, to raise money before appealing to the state.

But control? Even in those days, there were abuses. Dodgy employers paying cash-in-hand and allowing time off to sign on or sit at home waiting for the inspector. I know of many a seasonal hotel that was painted in the winter by the summer staff at the same time as they received unemployment benefit and the NAB supplement.

I don't doubt that civil servants are as dedicated now as they were 40 years ago, but if waste and corruption are to be eliminated, a new system is needed – not merely harsh to punish the fiddlers, but fair and sensible. After all, it's our money they're taking.

Yours sincerely,
L. A. CHANNON
Evesham,
Hereford & Worcester

Tumim's courage

From Mrs Beatrice M. Burgess

Sir: Following your article "Tumim saves his partner shot for Howard" (2 November), I would like to acknowledge the vision, wisdom, courage and determination of Judge Stephen Tumim in bringing to public attention the conditions into which our society allowed babies and toddlers to live in prison with their mothers. Subsequently, the conditions have improved in the mother and baby units in England.

Regrettably, recent policy decisions have led to such inhuman practices as the handcuffing of pregnant prisoners in hospitals outside prison.

One hopes Judge Tumim's prophecy of the pendulum swinging back soon becomes true.

Yours faithfully,
BEATRICE M. BURGESS
Chairperson, Babies In Prison
Maidstone, Kent

Mersey killing

From Mr John Cochrane

Sir: While I would be only too happy to see a world without the Beatles (2 November), I should point out that the so-called Mersey Sound did not replace skiffle as a popular music form, this had largely disappeared by the end of 1957 – six years earlier.

In common with all successful revolutions, the Mersey Sound replaced dying stagnation – in this case, the "bland soup" which any examination of the 1962 record charts would reveal.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN COCHRANE
Liverpool

Aftermath of the Quebec referendum

From Ms Linda N. Wallan

Sir: In the aftermath of the referendum in Quebec, and as a federalist, I agree with Conrad Black that, while I would certainly deplore the breakup of the country, nevertheless some good things might come of it.

Not least would be the abandonment of the ridiculous law that says everything must be bilingual – except in Quebec where everything must be in French only. As French-speaking Quebecers constitute less than 25 per cent of the total population, this lack of fair play against the majority is one of the major grievances that I hear from friends all over Canada.

Although Quebec separatists demand the right to their own sovereignty (while keeping the convenience of the Canadian dollar and passport), they appear to have given no thought to the pain that this would cause to the other 75 per cent of the population, especially the Maritimes. This makes Jean Chretien's promise of yet more concessions, including a constitutional veto, even more galling. Perhaps instead of concessions, the rest of Canada should let Quebec go, on condition that it relinquishes a corridor within its territory south of the St Lawrence River to allow Canada to remain a contiguous country.

Yours faithfully,
LINDA N. WALLAN
Highworth, Wiltshire

From Mr W. H. Renwick

Sir: My daughter rang me from Montreal last night to say that she feels like an "unwanted intruder" and she and her husband are thinking of moving.

I know how she feels. Her great-great-great grandfather was the first settler on a farm not 30 miles from Montreal. Her great-great grandfather ran a sawmill in the local village and then became editor of a newspaper in Montreal. Her father lived for 67 of his 68 years in Montreal.

None of this matters; the policy of the governments of the Province of Quebec over the last few decades has been the ethnic cleansing (and I use the expression deliberately) of those whose mother tongue is English. A million or so have been driven out of the province. It is a tragedy unparalleled in Canadian history (excepting, of course, the history of the original inhabitants).

It is illegal to put up a sign in any language except French. Any immigrant who speaks English is forbidden to send his/her children to an English school. And there is much more.

My daughter's husband shares her bewilderment at the hatred generated by the politicians. The curious thing is his family first arrived in 1680. He is French Canadian.
Yours truly,
W. H. RENWICK
Kent

From Mr Dean Rivando

Sir: Canadians who choose exile ("Section Two" "Dear Canadians", 1 November) fall into two main categories: those who seek fame and fortune (mainly to the US) and those who seek a richer cultural life (mainly to the UK).

Although I fall into the latter category as much by accident as choice (I fell in love with a British girl), the idea of returning to a Canada fractured by a narrow, anachronistic nationalism (with an underlying current of racism if Jacques Parizeau's comments after losing the "Yes" vote reflect his supporters' views) is extremely unappealing.

The irony for me is that Britain is becoming the Quebec of Europe, retrenching behind a nostalgic nationalism for an era that never was.

The fracture caused by the Quebec referendum between English and French, and within Quebec society itself, is so great that Canadians and Quebecers will not be able to wait another 15 years for this matter to be resolved.

Let's hope that the British Government's attitude to Europe, particularly in view of the upcoming Intergovernmental Conference, does not set Britain on the same road to political turmoil and economic decline.
Yours faithfully,
DEAN RIVANDO
London, N15
1 November

Legal folly of trying the judge

From Professor A. Bradley

Sir: For any politician to seek to blame the judges, directly or indirectly, for current weaknesses in Britain's social policies ("Regina versus the politicians", 2 November) is both a serious lapse in statesmanship as well as an inept failure to accept three essential features of the legal system today.

These are (1) the development of administrative law since the Sixties, which has equipped the judges with the means of reviewing the legality of innumerable acts of ministers, civil servants and local politicians; (2) the increased importance of human rights as a yardstick of governmental action, without which neighbourly relations between states, whether in Europe or the Commonwealth, are not possible; (3) the need, expressed in the Law Commission Act of 1965, for our legal system to have a means of keeping the law up to date in areas of social life where the inspiration for reform comes neither from political manifestos nor economic interests.

If any political party does not understand the distinct contribution that each of these elements makes to the rule of law today, it will probably not see the folly of attempting to bring judges of the distinction of Sir Henry Brooke and Dame Brenda Hale into the arena of party conflict.
Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY BRADLEY
London, EC4
2 November



Diannah Carroll in 1962

Mander & Mitchenson

The history of colour-blindness

From Ms Rhoda Koenig

Sir: The author of the marginal notes on your arts page today (31 October) asks, with reference to the black singer and actress Diannah Carroll's

starring in the touring company of *Sunset Boulevard*, "Is the American musical at last turning colour-blind?"

In 1962, Richard Rodgers opened *No Strings* with a white cast and ... Diannah Carroll.
Yours truly,
RHODA KOENIG
London, NW3

Closure was wrong option

From Cllr Kevin Daws

Sir: Further to your leading article "Orphans of a dead school" (1 November), I would like to take issue with your statement that Hackney Downs School should have been closed several years ago. The Liberal Democrats in this borough have consistently opposed the closure of Hackney Downs School for three main reasons.

First, we objected to the fact that during the original consultation process, the only option offered was closure. Second, it was dishonest for the Local Education Authority to give falling school rolls as a reason for closure when it was they who decided not to allow a year-seven entry in 1994. And third, there is overwhelming support from parents, pupils, teachers and the community for Hackney Downs School to remain open.

While Hackney Downs School had problems, these were being tackled; the Ofsted inspection in March of this year showed that the school was achieving the action plan agreed with the Department for Education.

Hackney Downs is not the only school in Hackney to have problems or to have received a bad Ofsted report. I cannot believe the only solution is to close every school that gets a bad Ofsted report, and to encourage even more children to go to schools outside the borough – more than 30 per cent currently do so.

It is outrageous that the school has been closed against the wishes of parents, teachers, governors, the community and the children themselves. Gillian Shepherd should stop playing politics with the future of our children.

Yours,
KEVIN DAWS
Leader of the Opposition
(Lib Dem)
London Borough of Hackney
London, EC1
1 November

When blood flowed freely

From Mr L. Vallet

Sir: In view of the recent correspondence on charges for blood and blood products, it may be of interest to recall that, before the Eighties, cash transactions were not normally associated with their use in the UK.

Collection, testing, processing and distribution costs were funded regionally or centrally within the NHS. An exception was made when blood products were sent overseas to meet special needs through the then Crown Agents or other responsible organisations to whom a nominal service charge was made. This did not apply to blood products sent for disaster relief.

In those days, when the prospect of a surplus of Factor VIII was scarcely imaginable, the potentially contentious questions of charges and profit that may compromise the principle and distinguished record of voluntary donation of blood did not arise.

Yours sincerely,
L. VALLET
Fishguard, Pembrokeshire
The writer was Deputy Director of the Blood Products Laboratory from 1961 to 1986.

DAVID AARONOVITCH

Gale's force



Like, I suspect, many readers, I get heartily sick sometimes of the "anything goes" mentality of the assorted liberals and lefties who write for this newspaper. So excuse me if I cannot join in the whining and hand-wringing that has accompanied this week's victory for pro-family forces. Journalist Bill Oddie of the *Daily Mail* and his parliamentary team (the Goodie-goodies?) have wrought wonders in stopping the Family Something and Whatsis Bill, which I'm told would have destroyed the essential and natural distinction between violence committed by proper husbands and that by mere live-in lovers.

It is little short of miraculous that a small band of doughty fighters should have been able to derail one piece of legislation – and now stand poised to do the same for the infamous Divorce Bill of Lord Mackay of Clashfern (a Scots Presbyterian who probably does not quite comprehend the importance that we strait-laced English folk attach to the institution of marriage). They deserve our thanks and – for a few short moments – our attention.

Of Lady Olga Maitland, dotting wife of Lord Olga Maitland, I have already written. Nothing that this estimable MP could do would ever surprise me. So it is time to swing the spotlight of fame on to her brave colleague Roger Gale, Mr Gale is parliamentary neighbour to Jonathan Aitken – and thus the MP from another Thane.

What puzzles the cynics of the anti-family press is how Mr Gale manages to be so vociferous in his condemnation of easy divorce – and yet is on to the third Mrs Gale, without ever having experienced the sadness of widowhood.

Wendy came in 1964 and departed just three years later. Susan walked the aisle in 1971, but lasted only until 1980. Another Susan took her place shortly afterwards. So (sneer the feminists) is Roger not being completely hypocritical? Even I, as a well-adjusted and normal heterosexual man, can see how attractive Roger Gale must be for many women. His very name suggests a certain breezy sexual self-confidence.

Now I have not spoken to Mr Gale about the Divorce Bill, but I am prepared to venture some guesses as to why this honourable multiple divorcee is himself so opposed to liberalising divorce. Firstly, it is possible that he knows that easier divorce would mean more divorce. Had such laws been available earlier, he may have ruminated, might he not have found himself married a disastrous eight or nine times?

Second, Mr Gale is chairman of the all-party animal welfare group and has campaigned for reprieves for Dempsey the Dog and Otis the 'Ound. He cares about dumb beasts and understands, I'm sure, all too well the psychological trauma that can be caused to them by familial breakdown. He has, if you like, heard the howling in the night.

But if you ask me to plump for one all-important psychological factor in his rejection of the permissive legacy of the Sixties, it is I call "the shock of self-recognition". Permit me to illustrate. This week, the Independent Television Commission reported on its survey into attitudes towards nudity in advertising. Many people were now prepared to accept that shower gels could appropriately be advertised by naked actors in showers, provided that they were not soaping themselves suggestively. They could also accept a late showing for a Darcy-esque chap up to his waist in pond water wearing only underpants (an Australian brand, appropriately called "Dim" – proof positive that most ads are aimed at women).

But what they could not cope with was the merest glimpse of male buttocks. Overwhelmingly, older men led this rejection. Every second's exposure, said the report, fuelled fear of an imminent parting of the lobes and a sudden sighting of that which lies between and behind. They were feeling the shock of self-recognition – of undesirable exposure of their nethermost regions. And what more natural than that an intelligent and sensitive man like Mr Gale should feel it, too? I bet he doesn't wear Dim underpants.

QUOTE UNQUOTE

The attitude which has encouraged newspapers and politicians to cry outrage every time lottery money is awarded to arts institutions is one which still tries to present Britain in a cloth cap with a chip on its shoulder – Nicholas Serota, director of the Tate Gallery

I don't want to end up in the top-right-hand corner of *Celebrity Squares* – Susan Tully, quitting *EastEnders* for the stage

I'm not ever going to be my father. I know that now – Julian Lennon, quitting pop music for the stage

I wasn't searched, quizzed or screened. If I was a terrorist I would have thought I'd died and gone to heaven – Justin Dunn, *Daily Mirror* journalist, who spent 48 minutes walking around the Treasury, Cabinet Office and No 10 Downing Street

It's not very often that I get hugs like that – the Princess of Wales, to a 10-year-old Birmingham schoolboy

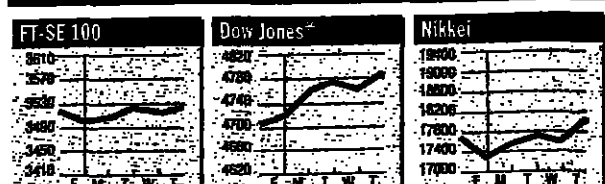
You can pontificate in print or on camera all night long, but unless you have submitted yourself for endorsement or rejection to the electorate, you count for very little – Alan Clark, former Conservative MP and minister

Handwritten text in Arabic script: "لا حول الا بالله"

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

MARKET SUMMARY

STOCK MARKETS



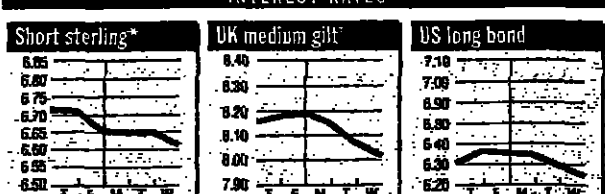
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	12 Mth High	12 Mth Low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	3500.4	-22.6	-0.6	3553.0	2943.4	4.0
FTSE 250	3678.7	-13.1	-0.3	3691.3	3300.9	3.5
FTSE 350	1742.7	-10.1	-0.6	1785.3	1477.0	3.9
FT Small Cap	1939.3	+3.1	+0.2	1983.1	1678.6	3.4
FT All-Share	1722.0	-9.0	-0.5	1762.8	1465.2	3.9
New York	4810.8	+2.2	+0.1	4810.8	3674.6	2.4
Tokyo	18026.8	-	-	18011.6	14485.4	0.8
Hong Kong	8855.8	+106.4	+1.1	10032.9	6967.9	3.3
Frankfurt	2181.7	-2.3	-0.1	2317.0	1911.0	2.0
Paris	1832.1	+3.4	+0.2	2017.3	1721.1	3.7
Milan	8336.0	-80.0	-1.0	10911.0	8612.0	2.7

*New Jones at 1345 hours, New Jones graph at 1315 hours

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

FTSE 250 companies (including investment trusts)	Price	Change	% Change
East Mid Elec	895.32	3.7	0.4
Invesco	215.5	8.5	3.9
Rugby Group	119.5	2.7	2.3
London Clubs	424.11	2.7	0.6
Loriva	158.35	2.3	1.5

INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates	1 Month	3 Month	6 Month	1 Year	2 Year	3 Year	5 Year
UK	6.88	6.75	7.90	8.68	8.02	8.54	8.54
US	5.69	5.50	5.92	7.95	6.26	6.10	6.10
Japan	0.50	0.72	2.99	4.82	3.65	4.99	4.99
Germany	4.06	4.06	6.44	7.70	7.17	8.09	8.09

*Bankmark indices

CURRENCIES



Pound	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Dollar	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
\$ (London)	1.5793	-0.12c	1.6175	£ (London)	0.6332	+0.05	0.6182
\$ (New York)	1.5798	+0.08c	-	£ (New York)	0.6333	unch	-
DM (London)	2.2348	-0.04c	2.4490	DM (London)	1.4158	-0.28p	1.5146
Yen (London)	163.82	-0.05	157.88	Yen (London)	103.57	+0.04	97.6
£ Index	84.3	-0.2	89.8	£ Index	93.5	unch	89.6

*New York rates and DM/£ Index at 1345 hours

OTHER INDICATORS

	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago		Index	Latest	Tr Ago	Next Figs
Oil Brent \$	16.63	-\$0.01	17.98	RPI	150.6	3.9pc	2.6	16 Nov
Gold \$	382.50	+\$0.50	383.70	GDP	106.6	2.4pc	4.1	20 Nov
Gold £	242.50	+\$0.50	237.22	Base Rates	—	6.75pc	5.25	—

Source: Datastream

Source: Datastream

IN BRIEF

Dollar stages a recovery

The dollar reached a six-week high against the yen and two-week high against the mark yesterday. Dealers said international investors were wary of the yen because of renewed concerns about the stability of the Japanese financial system. There were also suggestions that Japanese investors are becoming more willing to invest abroad - although no evidence yet that they have started to do so in significant amounts. A rise of 116,000 in the number of non-farm jobs in the US last month, and a fall in the unemployment rate to 5.5 per cent, took the dollar off its highs. So did profit-taking on this week's gains before the weekend. The dollar closed in London at ¥103.57 and DM1.4159.

Invesco fights back

Invesco, the international fund management company, announced yesterday that the funds it controls have rocketed by 19 per cent to more than £50bn in the first nine months of the year. The company said much of its success, with funds increasing £3bn since the end of 1994, came from the US. The recovery follows several years of relatively weak performance after Invesco's UK arm was caught up in the Maxwell pension scandal and in 1993 was fined £750,000 by its regulator for rule breaches.

Thumbs down to Lloyd's plan

Proposals by Lloyd's of London for market professionals to allocate more capital to riskier underwriting have met with wide disapproval in a consultation exercise which ended yesterday. Lloyd's said it will modify its proposals, but still intends to introduce "risk-based capital" on a monitoring basis in 1996.

German output falls again

German industrial output fell 1.9 per cent in September, dominated by a 5.1 per cent drop in the eastern Länder. It was the second unexpected drop in a row, taking output to a level 2.9 per cent lower than a year earlier. Analysts said the figures made a reduction in interest rates before Christmas more likely.

Sharp rise in store credit

Retail credit is booming, according to the latest monthly survey from the Finance and Leasing Association. The trade body said retail store credit grew 22 per cent in the year to September, reaching £561m. Demand for car finance was subdued after a bonanza in August. Finance for business was boosted by leasing, which doubled between August and September.

Brokers launch global network

The world's six biggest insurance brokers are teaming up to form a joint electronic trading network. The six - Sedgwick, Willis Corroon, Aon, Marsh & McLennan, Johnson & Higgins and Alexander & Alexander - aim to cut the cost of commercial insurance. BT will help to create the system, called World Insurance Network, which hopes to be in place by 1996.

Board changes at Hi-Tec

Edward Kirby has joined the board of Hi-Tec, the struggling sports shoe company that lost £12.5m in the 15 months to April, as a non-executive director. Bradley Lemkus, managing director of Hi-Tec Sports South Africa, has also joined the board. He replaces David Strongman who resigned to "pursue a new career in the Cayman Islands".

Lloyds-TSB chiefs to pocket £23m profit

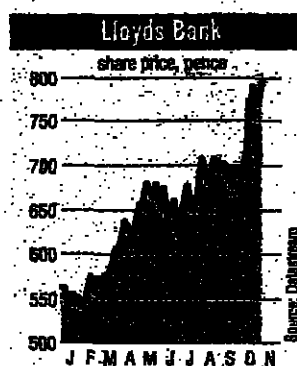
JOHN EISENHAMMER
Financial Editor

The 11 top executives of Lloyds Bank and the TSB are in line to make a £23m profit on their shares and options as part of the £14bn merger of the two banks.

Five of the most senior Lloyds executives, headed by Sir Brian Pitman, the chief executive, are shown to be worth £12m in fully paid-up shares and option paper profits. Sir Brian alone, has accumulated £4m in shares, with option paper profits worth £1.8m at yesterday's closing Lloyds price of 795p.

The structure of the deal as a reverse takeover of Lloyds by the TSB means the share options for Lloyds' directors are automatically triggered. Despite this, TSB directors can exercise the bulk of their options within the next year, and would represent a £7.4m profit at Lloyds' closing price last night.

Peter Ellwood, chief executive of the TSB, who is to be-



come one of the deputy chief executives of the Lloyds TSB group, is in line for a potential option gain of £2.7m. The TSB chairman, Sir Nicholas Goodison, faces a potential reward of £2.3m. The unusually close bunching of the exercise dates for the directors' TSB share options has provoked speculation that the prospect of a takeover had been taken into account. Lloyds confirmed yesterday

that the 280 senior executives and 32,000 staff at the bank are free to exercise their options as they wish, although a facility is being proposed for them to be rolled over into the new Lloyds TSB bank.

A Lloyds spokesman said that there had been no pressure from Sir Brian on directors not to exercise their options. Alan Moore, deputy chief executive of Lloyds, has £2m in paid-up shares and is in line for £422,742 in paper option gains. David Pirie, director of international and private banking at Lloyds, faces share option gains before tax of £1.1m; John Davies, deputy chairman, is in line for share option gains of £899,652; while Paul Brown, director of UK retail banking, shows paper option profits of £773,871.

Even though Lloyds is clearly the dominant partner, with 71 per cent of the £14bn capital and four directors on the board to the TSB's two, the deal has been structured as the TSB

taking over Lloyds. The main reason was to preserve the trust status of the TSB and its charitable foundations, as well as to take account of the TSB's particular status in Scotland. Lloyds TSB Group plc will have its registered office in Scotland.

TSB shareholders are to retain their existing share certificates. At last night's closing value of 379p, the shares are showing a substantial gain on the value of 273.5p on 6 October, the eve of the announcement of the financial terms of the takeover. The documents stated that TSB employees and directors are to be compensated for the impact of the 68p special dividend, worth £1bn, on the value of their share options.

Lloyds shareholders will need to exchange their existing shares. They will receive 2,704 new Lloyds TSB shares for every one of their ordinary Lloyds shares.

Lloyds TSB will recommend a final dividend for 1995 of not

Lloyds executive share and share options

	fully paid shares	share options
Brian Pitman chief executive	£4m (504,626)	£1.8m
Alan Moore deputy chief executive	£2m (253,016)	£422,742
John Davies deputy chairman	£768,941 (96,844)	£899,652
David Pirie director, international and private banking	£239,994 (30,226)	£1.1m
Paul Brown director, UK retail banking	£331,622 (41,766)	£773,871

options calculated at Lloyds' share price 794p

less than 7.8p (net) per Lloyds TSB share. The approval of Lloyds' shareholders is to be sought at an extraordinary general meeting on 27 November. A TSB egm will be held two

days later. If approved, the merger will become effective on 28 December. The special dividend will be paid to TSB ordinary shareholders on 18 January.

Airline high-flier: Ayling becomes chief executive in unexpected switch at British carrier

Marshall reign ends at BA after 12 years

PETER RODGERS
Business Editor

Sir Colin Marshall unexpectedly stepped down yesterday from the chief executive role at British Airways in favour of Bob Ayling, the managing director.

Sir Colin is to continue as chairman but on a non-executive, half-time basis. Mr Ayling, who earned £508,000 against Sir Colin's £765,000 last year, takes over all executive functions from 1 January.

British Airways denied it was anything other than a routine and long-planned handover. Sir Colin has been at BA for 13 years and chairman since 1993. A spokesman said: "There are genuinely other things he wants to do and he really does feel that now is the time to hand over."

Sir Colin, who will be 62 later this month, is taking over as deputy president of the CBI and will be its president from next spring. He is chairman of the Marketing Council, president of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, a director of the New York Stock Exchange and a non-executive at BT and HSBC.

Sir Colin's new role will be more diplomat than executive, with a focus on global alliances, government and regulator

relationships and the European Union, where deregulation of airlines could bring new opportunities for BA from 1997.

The lightning rise of Mr Ayling, who took his first mainstream management job only four years ago as director of marketing and operations, boosted the share price 9p to 474p, though part of this was due to good results from Qantas, where BA has 25 per cent. The job change was generally well received ahead of interim profits the City expects to be around £430m on Monday.

Mr Ayling had been head of legal services at the Department of Trade and Industry before joining British Airways, initially as legal director and then as company secretary and director of human resources. It was Sir Colin who made the approach through an intermediary.

BA rejected suggestions that the reshuffle was linked with the imminent resurfacing of the dirty-tricks row with Virgin, whose anti-trust case against BA could stretch over a couple of years, starting early next year. Sir Colin and Mr Ayling were both protagonists in the highly public battle with Richard Branson. Mr Ayling promised continuity in the airline's policy of de-



Astride the globe: Bob Ayling assumes the lead role at BA

Photograph: Gerald Lewis

veloping a global network, which has come under the spotlight recently because of the ups and downs of BA's relationship with USAir. First the 25 per cent owned associate lost money heavily, leading to a £125m write-down of the value of BA's stake, then, after recovering, the company began talks with American Airlines and United Airlines about a partnership that could end its relationship with the British carrier.

Mr Ayling said it was not clear at all that USAir would do a deal with other airlines and if possible he would wish to preserve the existing relationship. If it was not possible he wanted it replaced with an equally good relationship with another carrier, though he declined to comment on suggestions that this would be with American, which is reported to be dropping out of the talks with USAir.

He praised the virtues of continuity and dismissed as absolute rubbish reports that he was considering dropping the word British from the airline's name. He said the only change in his role would be spending more time on the international side of the business. Mr Ayling said: "The policy of developing a global network is the right one. But it has never been easy and it is not going to be easy."

Alliance Resources reveals damage

JOHN SHEPHERD

Alliance Resources yesterday revealed the full financial damage allegedly caused by John O'Brien, the company's deposed chief executive.

Alliance's official 49-page statement made to the Stock Exchange yesterday detailed the findings so far of investigations made by Lee & Allen, a UK firm of forensic accountants. The Serious Fraud Office is also conducting a separate investigation.

A worldwide Mareva injunction has been obtained against Mr O'Brien freezing his assets. Alliance also intends to take legal action against several offshore companies in which Mr O'Brien has now declared interests, and against several other unnamed defendants.

Among the allegations made against Mr O'Brien, the company claims that he fraudulently claimed that the Valentine 14 well, near New Orleans, was successful on various dates between 6 June and 19 July of this year.

Mr O'Brien is additionally ac-

cused of negotiating a loan in January 1995 from Progas Holdings, without disclosing that he had an interest in that company. He has admitted an interest since being sacked from the board.

Yesterday the company announced a loss of £18.2m (£11.4m) for the year to April, which wiped out shareholders' funds, and losses of £2.1m for the following five months to September.

The company's auditors from KPMG, the chartered accountancy firm, have heavily quali-

fied the accounts. The auditors warn that "because of the possible effect of the limitation in evidence available to us, we are unable to form an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the loss for the year to April and for the five-month period".

The annual loss was struck after a £16.68m write-down in the value of the group's oil and gas reserves. Results for the five months were struck after the £350,000 cost of funding the investigation into Mr O'Brien's alleged fraudulent actions.

Mr O'Brien claimed yesterday that the Alliance allegations were a witch-hunt, "set in train by the boardroom coup on 6 September." His response to the allegations will be the subject of a hearing later this month in the High Court, where he will attempt to have the Mareva injunction discharged.

Despite the financial mess, James Prior, chairman, believes effective steps are being taken to minimise the damage.

The shares returned from suspension yesterday to close at 1.5p, valuing Alliance at £5m.



Mohamed Al Fayed: take-off in store for customers

The sky is no longer the limit at Harrods

JOHN SHEPHERD

Taxi-drivers who toot for business outside the hallowed doors of Harrods in Knightsbridge are set for a nice little extra, dishing along a motorway to one of three London airports to enable the rich and famous to sample the store's new line in aviation.

Mohamed Al Fayed, the head of the family owners of Harrods, has shelved out £1m to buy Hunting Business Aviation, and an undisclosed sum for a 10-year lease on an executive jet centre at Heathrow.

Mr Al Fayed, who is never knowingly understated and is the owner of a G4 aircraft and Sikorsky helicopter, said: "This is a unique opportunity because this is a unique company. I have an ambitious programme

of development and no plans will be spared in making this the best company of its kind anywhere in the world."

Hunting Business Aviation operates out of Luton, Stansted and Heathrow airports. It is being sold by its joint owners, Hunting and British Petroleum. The executive jet centre is being sold by Hunting for £7m to BAA, which will then lease it to Harrods' newly created Metro Business Aviation division.

Harrods' association with aviation predates the foundation of the Royal Air Force. In 1903 the building and decorating department at Harrods was commissioned to build an oversized shed in London's Alexander Park for a Dr Barton (no relation to Dick) who was experimenting with airships.

By 1909 the Christmas stockings at stately homes could be topped off with a toy aeroplane fresh off the shelves in Knightsbridge, and by 1917 pilots of Tiger Moths could bravely go into a dogfight over France kitted out in Harrods' own aviators' fur-lined overcoats - a snip at 16 guineas each - a cap lined with chamois leather and trimmed with beaver fur for 18 shillings and sixpence, and a fashionable pair of goggles for one guinea.

A year after the First World War the department store went into aviation big-time, opening an aeroplane department. The advertisement in *Harrod News* on 7 April 1919 set out the range of goods available: "Anyone requiring a nice two-seater monoplane at £450, or a fine fly-

ing boat at £1,500, the cheapest in the country, can at once be accommodated."

The monoplane, the advertisement added, was just 20ft 6in long - "small enough to land in Piccadilly" - and no more expensive to keep than a "20-horsepower motor car".

Enthusiasm for flying among the public, however, did not appear to translate into sales. The aeroplane department was mothballed in the early 1920s, and was not rolled out of its second-floor hangar again until 1930 when Harrods decided to repackage its aeronautical offering by selling flying lessons and running an aeroplane hire service.

Light aeroplanes were lifted by crane to the second floor, and customers could purchase a

bottom-of-the-range Gypsy Moth for £700, and Gypsy Moth seaplanes from £900.

"All prices are subject to market fluctuations," customers were told, although, if they were short of a bob or two, Harrods would willingly "take your car in part exchange".

The department was grounded yet again when the *Lufthaffe* took to the skies over Europe in 1939. Harrods aviation was not revived after the Second World War.

Mr Al Fayed, though, is keen to take Harrods to the skies once more and in true Harrods style.

"This will be a six-star service," a spokesman said, who added that it was time to put the tiny UK executive jet business on the map.

COMMENT

Bank in crisis:
Tokyo jo
punishi

IN BRIEF

Peak merger

Profit refinancing

Express growth

Indai targets

Lock confident

Amol supplement

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After 200 years of quietly selling upmarket jewellery to the rich and royal, Asprey has been laid low and lost its independence in little more than a decade.

A princely sum for the Asprey family silver

Selling the family silver is always a painful business, but when the person doing it is John Asprey, one of the world's most famous names in jewellery and silver, it must be doubly difficult. As always in such circumstances, there is more than a whiff of desperation about the sale, even if Mr Asprey has managed to extract a far higher price than many thought possible. It has been a long, long rise for the House of Asprey, but a depressingly rapid fall. After 200 years of quietly selling upmarket jewellery to the rich and royal, Asprey has been laid low and lost its independence in little more than a decade.

Where did it all go wrong? One culprit was the recession, which closed the purse strings of even the most affluent of punters and made that diamond-encrusted cigar case an expendable luxury. Another was the expansion programme, which saw the group attempt to broaden its customer base with a flurry of mid-market acquisitions. That strategy may once have had something to commend it but it looks like folly now. Its architect was Naim Attallah, the group's flamboyant chief executive and a long-standing friend of Mr Asprey. Mr Attallah retired yesterday, a year earlier than expected, and is likely to be paid a year's salary (£300,000) in compensation.

But this is history. The real question is why the wealthy prince should want to buy Asprey at all and why he should pay so much. A key asset of the group remains its brand

names. For all the recent tribulations, the Bond Street store remains a byword for dignity and taste. As the Crown Jewellers, Gardner will always be a treasure. Even so, the 250p per share offer looks remarkably generous at double the previous day's closing price. No more than speculation this, but it is always possible that the view was taken that since the Brunei royal family is one of Asprey's largest customers, it might as well own the company too.

Benchmarking is not a panacea

Benchmarking is a term that, when applied to companies, might seem hardly to merit a thought, let alone an opinion. Among aficionados, however, it clearly stirs strong passions. To prove the point, one of the most established names in this highly specialised business, PIMS Associates, has launched a bitterly critical broadside against a new benchmarking service for manufacturing industry to be launched by the CBI at its annual conference next week. In part, this is just sour grapes. The CBI service is likely to cost just £1,000 a go, while PIMS rarely charges less than £10,000 for its more sophisticated version. But there is more to it than that.

As the word implies, to benchmark a company is to measure its performance against others – allowing it to identify its strengths

and weaknesses and to assess its relative position in the world. It is a job you might think about as exciting as being an actuary. But such is its appeal that its use has spread like topsy in recent years. More recently still, its cause has been taken up by the Department of Trade and Industry and the CBI. The former CBI director general, Howard Davies – now deputy governor of the Bank of England – described it as one of the most important ideas to come out of the DTI's competitiveness programme.

A national benchmarking service – to enable Britain's small firms to compare their performance with the world's best – has just been launched by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade. The idea is that it should complement the CBI's service, a joint venture between IBM and the London Business School, which is aimed at larger firms with more than 60 employees.

So far so good. Unfortunately, benchmarking cannot offer miracle cures. When crudely applied it can be positively harmful, pushing businesses in entirely the wrong direction. To compare one company with its industry leaders without accounting for market dynamics, culture and corporate structure can be highly dangerous. Competitive strategy is much more than comparing numbers. Until you establish the true drivers of performance, benchmarking against industry best practice is often of little value. That most basic piece of management advice acts as a warning to those who

see benchmarking as a panacea: copy the strengths of your successful competitors and you will fail; analyse their weaknesses and attack them there, and you will succeed.

The CBI service is certainly a modest effort – a quick self-assessment of corporate strengths and weaknesses under the guidance of an expert facilitator. It is almost certainly true that in this area, as in so many others, you get what you pay for, whether Rolls or Renault Clio. Newcomers to benchmarking, through the DTI and CBI services, should not be fooled into thinking it will solve all their problems.

Challenge for the Chancellor

There is a new tradition to brighten up the British autumn. After Halloween and Guy Fawkes Night, a month of feverish pre-Budget speculation now fills the gap until Christmas shopping can start in earnest. As the Cabinet met this week to draw the public spending round towards a close, the Treasury's panel of independent forecasters contributed its advice to Mr Clarke.

The new report from the panel confirms that a majority of the Wise Men, as prudent as their nickname implies, think there is only modest scope for tax cuts. Bigger reductions would have to be matched by bigger spending cuts, most of them agreed. However, the financial markets have been softened up dur-

ing the past few days for a bigger tax giveaway than the average economist – including most of the Treasury's panel – has been willing to endorse. The new consensus is that we have £6-7bn in tax cuts to look forward to, rather than the cautious £3-4bn limit the City had settled on.

Yet even with expectations successfully primed, the Chancellor will still have to satisfy the markets that he is not flinching caution to the winds in an irresponsible canter towards the general election. The Government's borrowing requirement will have to continue shrinking – and credibly so. He will have to keep it heading towards balance in the medium term.

While there is little doubt that, with the spending cuts agreed by Cabinet, he will be able to make the arithmetic work, the catch is that wielding the spending axe rarely works. In practice the axe is always more like a trick dagger whose blade disappears on contact with a hard obstacle.

A control total of £260bn implies an increase in expenditure equal to about half the rate of inflation in 1996-97. Since the last election public spending has grown by about 2 per cent a year in real terms. It is not true that real government expenditure never falls. Denis Healey managed it in 1977 after the IMF crisis. So did Geoffrey Howe in 1981, in the excitement of early Thatcherism. But it is a little difficult to believe that Mr Clarke is going to meet with similar success in present circumstances.

Bank in crisis: Embattled institution looks for merger openings as prosecutors accuse it of covering up criminal trading

Tokyo joins US in punishing Daiwa

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Tokyo

Within hours of being ordered out of the US and indicted on criminal charges, Daiwa Bank was dealt a further blow with a harsh list of punitive sanctions from the Japanese government.

Japan's Ministry of Finance banned Daiwa from opening new overseas offices and ordered it to scale down its overseas lending and securities business. Deprived of a presence in the world's biggest financial centre, and with its reputation in tatters, the bank admitted that it has discussed the possibility of a merger with Sumitomo Bank.

In New York on Thursday the Federal Reserve Board and the state banking department gave the bank 90 days to close all its banking operations in the US, citing "unsafe and unsound banking practices and violations of law over an extended period of time". The order accused senior Daiwa managers of falsifying bank reports in order to conceal the losses of \$1.1bn (£690m), which were incurred over 11 years and finally reported on 18 September. US prosecutors announced a

24-count criminal indictment against the bank and arrested Masahiro Tsuda, the former general manager of its New York branch. The charges, carrying a maximum fine of \$1.3bn, include conspiracy, wire and mail fraud, obstructing inspectors, falsifying records, and failure to report criminal offences.

"The message to the financial community from today's indictment should be clear and unambiguous," said Mary Jo White of the US Attorney's Office. "Law enforcement will not tolerate financial authorities who unlawfully attempt to mislead regulatory authorities and cover up criminal misconduct by their employees," she said.

At Daiwa Bank's London office, the headquarters of its European operations, Peter Clarke, deputy general manager, said there was no information yet about cutbacks. "We have not heard anything specific yet. We are just waiting to see what happens," he said. Daiwa employs 110 people in London, with a personal Japanese customer base as well as wholesale lending operations.

At its headquarters in Osaka, Daiwa's president, Takashi Kaiho, accepted the closure

order, but insisted that responsibility for the losses lay entirely with Toshhide Iguchi, the New York-based trader who made the illegal trades. "Our bank is the sole victim of illicit transactions by Iguchi," he said. "We did not intend to cover it up, but our knowledge and interpretation of US laws were somewhat inadequate."

Japan's Ministry of Finance, however, hinted that the bank had covered up the losses and acknowledged for the first time that it made serious mistakes of its own. The scandal has become a serious embarrassment to ministry bureaucrats who failed to notify US authorities, despite learning of the losses six weeks before they were made public.

Yesterday, Yoshimasa Nishimura, the director of the ministry's banking bureau, agreed that he "should have taken into account the characteristic American attitude" and notified authorities earlier.



Victim: Takashi Kaiho (right), Daiwa's president yesterday, who said the bank's 'knowledge and interpretation of US laws were somewhat inadequate'. Photograph: Reuters

Fed will face Senate hearing

DAVID USBORNE
New York

As the gravity of the latest charges in the Daiwa bond trading scandal reverberated through the American political and financial system yesterday, the US Senate prepared to hold special hearings on the affair later this month.

Federal Reserve officials, possibly including the chairman, Alan Greenspan, will be quizzed at the hearings over what exactly happened at Daiwa, why it went undetected for so long and on what steps will be taken to prevent any similar scandals.

Most worrying have been the lengths to which Daiwa went to conceal its breach of a direct order from US regulators to separate its New York branch's bond trading from other activities. In what sounds more like a tale from the speakeasies of the Prohibition era, it is alleged that whenever US bank examiners were due to visit the downtown branch, Daiwa managers would temporarily send the traders up to the midtown office and disguise their trading floor as a store room. When the inspectors were gone, the trading desks and computers would be unwrapped and re-booted.

According to the US government, Daiwa Bank not only allowed two months to pass from the moment of the initial confession of Toshhide Iguchi – the former Daiwa vice-president charged with losing \$1.1bn – but sought ways to help Mr Iguchi conceal what happened and cover his tracks.

Mr Iguchi was invited, for example, to a secret meeting with managers from New York and Osaka at the Park Lane Hotel in Manhattan on 28 July, when it was agreed that nothing would be said to the US authorities until the end of November, when the bank's interim results were due. Mr Iguchi was later told to erase from his computer the evidence of his letter of confession.

It has been more than a month since the arrest of Mr Iguchi, whose illegal bond trades over 11 years have disgraced one of Japan's largest banks.

Momentum for a Congressional hearing was launched by Senator Alfonse D'Amato, the chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. He said yesterday that hearings had become necessary once it became clear that Mr Iguchi had not acted as a rogue trader, as Daiwa had originally claimed.

IN BRIEF

Dalepak merger agreement

Frozen-food manufacturer Dalepak Foods and Cavaghan & Gray, one of Marks & Spencer's largest food suppliers, have agreed to merge in what amounts to a reverse takeover of the quoted Dalepak. The deal values Cavaghan & Gray at about £43.4m compared with Dalepak's market value of £12.3m. Future development of the enlarged group, as well as repayment of some borrowings, will be funded by a placing and open offer of up to 14.3 million new Dalepak shares at 105p to raise about £13m. Under the open offer, qualifying Dalepak shareholders are being offered 31 new Dalepak shares for every 25 they own.

Smurfit refinancing package

Jefferson Smurfit is to issue up to \$500m (£310m) of long-dated debt to refinance borrowings. The offering is the Irish paper and paperboard manufacturer's first in the US public-debt markets and follows the listing of the company's ADRs representing its shares on the New York market during the summer.

PizzaExpress growth continues

PizzaExpress, the restaurant owner, said at the company's annual general meeting yesterday that recent turnover had been 30 per cent ahead of this time last year. In more mature restaurants, over three years old, sales had risen 4 per cent, and margins had returned to satisfactory. PizzaExpress intends to have five new restaurants open before the half-year results announcement in February 1996. The shares closed 13p higher at 206p.

Hyundai targets Maxtor

Hyundai, the Korean electronics group, said it plans to spend \$223m acquiring the 63 per cent stake that it does not own in the US's Maxtor Corporation as part of its plan to become the world's largest hard-disk-drive manufacturer within 10 years. Hyundai said it plans to expand its annual disk-drive production capacity to 8 million units by 2000, with sales forecast to be \$1.6bn per year by then.

Hozelock confident

Hozelock said its trading has continued to meet expectations since its interim and expressed confidence in the full-year result. The company's interim and expressed confidence in the full-year result. The company's interim and expressed confidence in the full-year result. The company's interim and expressed confidence in the full-year result.

Efamol supplement launch

Scotia Holdings' subsidiary Efamol has launched Efalex, a nutritional supplement formulated to improve night vision in dyslexic children and the first supplement of its kind on the market. Scotia's shares closed 4p lower at 65.2p.

COMPANY RESULTS				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Hamworthy (P)	19.3m (22.4m)	0.58m (1.08m)	4.7p (8.1p)	1.5p (1p)
Northwood Railway (I)	26.7m (24.8m)	1.91m (2.08m)	6.1p (6.5p)	0.9p (0.8p)
Star-Style (G)	23.5m (21.8m)	0.39m (1.58m)	1.5p (2.7p)	nil (nil)
By - PwC	(I) - Interim	(M) - Nine months		

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Signs of recovery at Cordiant

When the terms of a rights issue cause a rise in the company's share price, you can assume that the cash call has been priced to succeed. The market liked the look of Cordiant's £127m one-for-one rights issue, pitched at 60p a share. The stock rose 8p to 92p on news of the issue yesterday, to the relief of Cordiant's management.

If successful, the issue will allow Cordiant more or less to wipe out its borrowings. Moreover, a restructuring of debt facilities gives Cordiant far better terms for future credit: only 1.5 percentage points over Libor, rather than the current three.

In exchange Cordiant is making some extravagant promises: that revenues will grow by at least as much as those in its peer group (integrated, global advertising companies) and that profit margins will improve markedly, rising to "double digits" in the course of 1998.

One can assume that such margins are within reach: other companies (witness WPP) are on their way there already; moreover, the advertising market is improving, and most analysts expect an even better 1996, in both the US and Britain, thanks to likely monetary loosening in the lead-up to elections and a rise in consumer confidence and ad spend.

The question is: can Cordiant, dogged with high-profile problems of recent months (founder Maurice Saatchi's departure, the defection of key ad accounts such as Dixons, Mars and British Airways, restructuring costs of £50m this year) really ride the recovery?

If not, investors might want to think twice about subscribing to the rights issue. But if the new management changes, financial restructuring and a steady slew of new business over

the past few months are enough to convince the doubters, then a 60p price at which to top up holdings will probably look a bargain-basement entry level in a few months.

So how good is current management? Certainly, Bob Seelert has convinced many at Cordiant that he has the contacts in the US (the company's main market) to improve business prospects there. A background in consumer products is helpful for anyone trying to woo ad clients. Secondly, many have been impressed by Mr Seelert's promise to exchange all his net proceeds from a £160,000 bonus into Cordiant shares. That would be an expensive gesture if he didn't feel confident.

The corner may well have been turned. Profits might be as high as £43m in 1996, after the current year's £5m (declined by write-offs for the restructuring). Earnings per share

in 1996 of 5.3p a share would put the shares on 17 times next year's earnings. That's not cheap but Cordiant has all the signs of a good recovery stock.

Casuals bid stays at 140p

The bid for Country Casuals entered its final phase yesterday after former chairman John Shannon said he would not increase his 140p a share offer "in any circumstances". His unusual statement means he cannot make a higher offer for the women's clothes retailer even if a white knight should now emerge. In the absence of another bidder, shareholders now have as much information as they are going to get.

At first sight, Mr Shannon is offering a welcome escape from what has proved a dud invest-

ment since its flotation at 130p just over three years ago. A profits warning in September last year sent the shares to 82p at one stage, halving Country Casuals' market capitalisation, and prompted Mr Shannon's departure.

If the bid now fails, the shares are likely to fall back nearer to the 114p at which they stood before Mr Shannon's interest became known early last month. However, there is weight to the management's arguments that the performance of the company has improved since it parted company with Mr Shannon.

Many of the company's problems have stemmed from diversifications into formalwear for younger and larger women made while he was in charge. The former business has now been sold and stripping out losses at the latter, the Elvi outfit format being retained, would leave underlying profits of perhaps £3.5m. If successful, Mr Shannon would therefore be picking up the core Country Casuals and Lense manufacturing operations on a p/e of around 11.

Thus far, Mr Shannon's bid vehicle, Ciro Holdings, has won acceptances from 34 per cent of Country Casuals' shareholders. Excluding his own 18.8 per cent holding and the 13.3 per cent of PDM, the fund managers with whom he is acting, that represents acceptance by only 1.9 per cent of the formerly uncommitted shareholders.

The bid is hardly generous, but the outcome could be close given that institutions may not have sufficient faith in the remaining management to stay aboard. Holders wishing to take no chances should sell in the market.

Cordiant: at a glance

Market value: £408m, share price 92p

Five-year record: 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994

Revenue (£m): 23.6 32.1 40.5 48.2 57.4

Pre-tax profits (£m): 0.6 0.8 1.0 1.2 1.4

Earnings per share (p): 0.6 0.8 1.0 1.2 1.4

Net debt (£m): 250 200 150 100 50

Share price (pence)

1990 91 92 93 94 95

250 200 150 100 50

1990 91 92 93 94 95

250 200 150 100 50

1990 91 92 93 94 95

250 200 150 100 50

1990 91 92 93 94 95

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INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS

market report/shares

Gap between London and Wall Street yawns wider

TAKING STOCK

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100

3,500.4 -22.6

FT-SE 250

3,873.7 -13.1

FT-SE 350

1,742.7 -10.1

SEAQ VOLUME

755.3m shares,

26,886 bargains

Gifts Index

93.84 -0.2

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

Share price, pence

190

185

180

175

170

165

160

155

150

145

M J J A S O

Ladbroke Group

The yawning gap between London and New York grows even more baffling. As the FT-SE 100 index gave up 22.6 points the Dow Jones Average, in early trading, made further headway.

The 1,300-plus point difference between the two markets is, many stockbrokers believe, the widest recorded and illustrates the under-performance of London shares.

At one time London clung fiercely to New York's coattails, mirroring its moods and movements. Some of that attitude still prevails. New York's record-breaking display overnight sent Footsie romping ahead in early trading.

But the enthusiasm soon petered out. With futures-led activity taking its toll and with an element of old-fashioned profit-taking contributing, the index ended at 3,500.4.

A round of profit down-

gradings also contributed to end-of-week indifference. After the mauling the food retailers received in the wake of the I Sainsbury profits disappointment, attention turned to the food manufacturers.

As the supermarkets strive to hold their margins in the price war they will squeeze the producers; so profit downgradings were in the air.

Associated British Foods, reporting strong, crumbled 20p to 688p and Dalgety gave up 20p to 401p. Bookers, Hillsdown and Northern Foods also fell back.

The supermarket chains remained weak, with Sainsbury off 7p at 384p. One of the few sparks of retail joy was provided by Asprey, the up-market jeweller, as Prince Jerfi Bolikah of Brunei launched a £243.5m offer (25p a share). The price rocketed 119p to 246p.

British Airways, with inter-



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

im figures on Monday, rose 9p to 474p on the appointment of Robert Ayling as chief executive. P&O progressed 9p to 495p on dividend yield considerations and a James Capel move from sell to hold.

Standard Chartered remained firm, up 4p at 521p, on takeover talk and National Westminster Bank continued to reflect the rich rewards it is expected to receive from its US arm. The shares gained 9p to 638p.

Electricities were firm on the clearance of the Norweg bid: East Midlands, reorganising its operational structure, rose 3p to 895p, Yorkshire managed an 11p gain to 898p.

Allied Domecq, with results due on Tuesday, tumbled 11.5p to 494.5p. Matthew Naylor at Williams de Broe describes the shares as "too cheap to buy; hold and hope". He forecasts profits of £560m, down from £635m.

Cordiant, the debt-laden advertising agency, duly produced a 60p rights issue, lifting the shares 8p to 92p.

But Ladbroke, the betting and hotel group, stumbled to a year's low, down 8p to 154p. Although interim figures were better than some expected, the market is fretting about current trading. Hotels should be improving but the

betting side is thought to be under growing pressure.

There are also suggestions that Ladbroke plans a big acquisition. It is still thought to want to increase its casino spread and a deal to take over some Hilton Hotels in the US is believed to be on the group's agenda.

Glaxo Wellcome fell 20p to 851p on rumours that it had a £1.5bn tax bill to settle following the Wellcome deal earlier this year. More than 33 million shares were traded, with Merrill Lynch said to have encountered difficulty placing a 2.5 million line.

Bluebird, the toys group, held at 359p; rumours persist that the US toys group Hasbro is continuing a stake-build and could soon have as much as 13 per cent of the equity. Alliance Resources, the oil group, returned at 1.5p with turnover nudging 9 million shares. Cluff Resources, the

gold miner that is in bid talks, rose a further 7p to 83p.

Rhino, the computer games retailer, had an eventful time, jumping 7.5p to 18p. Volume approached 4 million shares with one deal, for 500,000, completed at 23p. Trading in the nil paid rights is due to start on Tuesday. Electronics Boutique, a US group with more than 400 video shops, is supporting Rhino. It has 25 per cent of the company and backed the 8p-a-share rights issue, which raised £9m. CentreGold, a computer games group, improved 8p to 77p as bid talk resurfaced.

Mid States, running car part outlets in the US, fell 3.5p to 37.5p following a profit fall. UK Safety lost 11p to 19p after a profit warning.

Trafficmaster advanced a further 19p to 219p on a licence deal with Mannesmann, the German group. The shares have climbed 59p this week.

Cartisile, once a financial group, now deep into property, could be on the verge of changing its spots again. Its next involvement could take it into mobile telephones and there is talk of a deal with The Peoples Phone Co, which is 35 per cent owned by the merchant bank Singer & Friedlander. Cartisile is headed by the entrepreneur Nigel Wray, whose interests embrace the Barford property group. There is a feeling that Cartisile may be prepared to sell its property side to Barford. Its shares held at 13.75p.

Expect African Gold to show a sharp trading improvement when it produces interim figures in six weeks. Gold is rolling from its Inex mine in Zimbabwe and year's profits could top £1m. Assets are thought to be 15p a share. The price held at 6p.

BANKS, MERCHANT

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Barclays	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
HSBC	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
London & Lancashire	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Midland	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Natwest	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Paragon	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Prudential	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Royal Bank of Scotland	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Santander	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
TSB	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Yorkshire	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

BANKS, RETAIL

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

BREWERIES

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

BUILDING/CONSTRUCTION

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

ELECTRICITY

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

ELECTRONICS

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

BUILDING MATERIALS

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

CHEMICALS

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00

DISTRIBUTORS

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
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ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
ABN Amro	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
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BREWERIES

Stock	Price	Chg	Yld	P/E	Index
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5	12.5	280.00
Adnams	280.00	0.00	4.5		

Anzum looks good to gain upper hand for Nicholson

Racing
GREG WOOD

Just in case the Flat has having any second thoughts about retiring to his winter quarters, the National Hunt heavy mob is out in force this afternoon to persuade its summer cousin that its time is up. If it has any sense, the Flat will go quietly.

It is quite simply no contest. The afternoon's only card on the level is at Doncaster, where the feature race, the November Handicap, brings together a tired and familiar collection of animals, asked to drag themselves to the well one last time. Over the sticks, by contrast, five coverings in Britain and an excellent card at Navan will bring many of the best hurdlers and chasers into competition for the first time.

The five televised National Hunt races, from Cheltenham and Wincanton, are just the beginning. At Doncaster, the Hebridean, Her Honour, Berude Not To and the highly promising Cherrynut are among those

involved, but events on the "minor" cards include the Ekbalco Hurdle at Newcastle and a Grade Two novice hurdle at Uttoxeter. At Navan, meanwhile, Dorans Pride, winner of the Stayers' Hurdle at last year's Cheltenham Festival, and Sound Man, narrow runner-up in the Arkle Trophy, are the principal attractions, not least

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Snow Princess
(Doncaster 3.25)
NB: Naked Welcome
(Doncaster 2.20)

for Richard Dunwoody, who will ride in Ireland in order to maintain his association with Sound Man.

Some of the names in the Rising Stars Novice Chase at Cheltenham may not yet be so familiar, but it is just a matter of time. A fascinating evening pits Cherrynut, Paul Nicholson's latest recruit from point-to-pointing, against Berude Not To, one of last season's best novice hurdlers.

Nicholls's string finished last season in indifferent form, after an excellent start which took several good prizes back to the West Country. All seems to be well now, and Cherrynut (2.00), highly thought of by his trainer, can reinforce Nicholson's growing reputation as a rising star in his own right, particularly where chasers are concerned.

Cherrynut's seasonal debut, at Worcester, brought a convincing three-length defeat of Linden's Lotto, another of today's rivals, and while John White's chaser should, in theory, be able to reverse the form on 10lb better terms, he was already race-fit at Worcester while Cherrynut must have plenty of improvement to come.

The colours to back in the Tote Silver Trophy are usually the black and orange of Bill and Shirley Robins, successful in three of the last four years, but carried away by Silver Wedge, one of last season's best juveniles. The silks are one of the few constants in the racing life of Mr and Mrs Robins, who change trainers as regularly as

Gazza changes his hairstyle. Oliver Sherwood, who prepares Silver Wedge - for the moment, at least - inherited him from David Nicholson, who in turn took delivery of the Robins string from Jenny Finneran. Both trainers saddle runners in today's race, but it is Nicholson's ANZUM (nap 1.30) who looks weighted to exact revenge.

At Wincanton, David Elsworth saddles two-thirds of the runners in the Elite Hurdle, with Atoms (2.30), who might yet be a Champion Hurdle contender in a very weak year, fancied to beat his stablemate, Absalom's Lady. Paul Nicholls pops up again in the Badger Beer Chase, in which he saddles Brackenfield, but they will all struggle to keep pace with Wise Approach (next best 3.00). Kim Bailey's chaser simply jumped too well when jumping over on the last four years, but last week, back on a more suitable track, his rapid progress can continue.

And as for Doncaster, try Indigo Time (3.25) and Royale Figurine (2.50). If you must,

CHEPSTOW
1.00: James The First was an emphatic winner first time out, but has been missed 5lb for that success in a weak race and SAILOR JIM, an improved horse last season, should now be fit after a couple of outings. Postynyswen is the danger.

1.30: SILVER WEDGE is probably better suited by today's trip than the two miles over which he competed last season and can hold his own against the four-year-olds Belmuck and Anzum.

2.00: Although Cherrynut is highly regarded by his trainer, he will need to be special to give 4lb to one of last season's top novice hurdlers, BERUDE NOT TO.

DONCASTER
2.20: Capias and NAKED WELCOME meet on the same terms as they would have in the November Handicap and should dominate. John Gosden's runner is held by Peter Chappell (on the level) and by the same token, the selection is improving more rapidly and his turn of foot gives him the edge. He holds Lathbury on a line through Whitelap on their trip for the first time under Flat rules and should confirm placings with irrefutable Non Vintage and exposed Good Hand.

4.00: The Cozenwether winner, Old Red, steps back in trip and is not so well handicapped now with the fourth, Incehall. Another of Mary Reaveley's runners, SUGAR MILK, has made some good progress for the first time under Flat rules and should confirm placings with irrefutable Non Vintage and exposed Good Hand.

WINCANTON
2.30: With Absalom's Lady lacking an outing, CLYFFORD BEAT, who was the best juvenile, may outpace the poor jumper Atoms.

3.00: BAS DE LAINE is lightly raced over fences, well suited by today's fast ground and right-hand track and made an encouraging turn behind the Eter General Rusty.



HYPERION'S
TIPS

HYPERION
1.25 Storm Run
1.55 Gospel
2.30 Clifton Beat
3.00 BAS DE LAINE (nap)

GOING: Good to Firm (Good in places).
■ Right-hand, galloping course, run-in of 200yd.
■ Course in N.W. of town on B3031. Temperature station (service from London, W. 1000) 50. Admissions: Members 4.4 (Juniors, 17 to 22 years, 55.50); Tourists 20; Concess (and race to come) 6.4. (Under-16s free all enclosures). CAR PARK: Free.

ALL RACES

3.25: Whitecap, an excellent third when a pacemaker in Group company last time, 8lb higher than when meeting a tactical success in the Newbury Autumn Handicap. He, like lightly raced Indigo Time and Sator, prefers give take and Sator, who was the best juvenile, may outpace the poor jumper Atoms.

SNOW PRINCESS proved her adaptability to different going at Newmarket last week and even with an 8lb penalty is still only 4lb higher than for that fluent win.

4.00: The Cozenwether winner, Old Red, steps back in trip and is not so well handicapped now with the fourth, Incehall. Another of Mary Reaveley's runners, SUGAR MILK, has made some good progress for the first time under Flat rules and should confirm placings with irrefutable Non Vintage and exposed Good Hand.

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DONCASTER

12.50 Serendipity
1.30 Quality
1.50 Little Inn
2.20 Naked Welcome

GOING: Good to Firm (Good in places).
■ Stallions: Straight - stands side; round - inside.
■ DRAW ADVANTAGE: 1-10, 11-20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61-70, 71-80, 81-90, 91-100, 101-110, 111-120, 121-130, 131-140, 141-150, 151-160, 161-170, 171-180, 181-190, 191-200, 201-210, 211-220, 221-230, 231-240, 241-250, 251-260, 261-270, 271-280, 281-290, 291-300, 301-310, 311-320, 321-330, 331-340, 341-350, 351-360, 361-370, 371-380, 381-390, 391-400, 401-410, 411-420, 421-430, 431-440, 441-450, 451-460, 461-470, 471-480, 481-490, 491-500, 501-510, 511-520, 521-530, 531-540, 541-550, 551-560, 561-570, 571-580, 581-590, 591-600, 601-610, 611-620, 621-630, 631-640, 641-650, 651-660, 661-670, 671-680, 681-690, 691-700, 701-710, 711-720, 721-730, 731-740, 741-750, 751-760, 761-770, 771-780, 781-790, 791-800, 801-810, 811-820, 821-830, 831-840, 841-850, 851-860, 861-870, 871-880, 881-890, 891-900, 901-910, 911-920, 921-930, 931-940, 941-950, 951-960, 961-970, 971-980, 981-990, 991-1000, 1001-1010, 1011-1020, 1021-1030, 1031-1040, 1041-1050, 1051-1060, 1061-1070, 1071-1080, 1081-1090, 1091-1100, 1101-1110, 1111-1120, 1121-1130, 1131-1140, 1141-1150, 1151-1160, 1161-1170, 1171-1180, 1181-1190, 1191-1200, 1201-1210, 1211-1220, 1221-1230, 1231-1240, 1241-1250, 1251-1260, 1261-1270, 1271-1280, 1281-1290, 1291-1300, 1301-1310, 1311-1320, 1321-1330, 1331-1340, 1341-1350, 1351-1360, 1361-1370, 1371-1380, 1381-1390, 1391-1400, 1401-1410, 1411-1420, 1421-1430, 1431-1440, 1441-1450, 1451-1460, 1461-1470, 1471-1480, 1481-1490, 1491-1500, 1501-1510, 1511-1520, 1521-1530, 1531-1540, 1541-1550, 1551-1560, 1561-1570, 1571-1580, 1581-1590, 1591-1600, 1601-1610, 1611-1620, 1621-1630, 1631-1640, 1641-1650, 1651-1660, 1661-1670, 1671-1680, 1681-1690, 1691-1700, 1701-1710, 1711-1720, 1721-1730, 1731-1740, 1741-1750, 1751-1760, 1761-1770, 1771-1780, 1781-1790, 1791-1800, 1801-1810, 1811-1820, 1821-1830, 1831-1840, 1841-1850, 1851-1860, 1861-1870, 1871-1880, 1881-1890, 1891-1900, 1901-1910, 1911-1920, 1921-1930, 1931-1940, 1941-1950, 1951-1960, 1961-1970, 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 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sport

Europe 7 Britain 1

Despite the marked decline of British clubs in European competition over recent years, rarely can one week have provided so much despair and so little encouragement.

Glenn Moore studies the causes and possible solutions

Those who believe the maxim "goalkeepers are crazy" gained more evidence this week. Mark Crossley, of Nottingham Forest, followed up Tuesday's match-saving performance against Auxerre by saying: "Bring on Barcelona, bring on Bayern Munich". Judging by the defeats inflicted on every other British team, he ought to have been asking: "Is anyone from the Faroes Islands left in?"

After a grim week Forest are the only English club left in Europe; only Rangers fly the Scottish flag – and that, after conceding eight goals in two games, is at half-mast. Meanwhile all six Spanish clubs remain in the frame, the French have five, the Italians and Germans four. Even the cities of Prague and Moscow have more teams left than England or Scotland. To rephrase a comment once made about our cricketers, there are just three things wrong with British football – we cannot tackle, cannot pass and cannot shoot.

The bad news is, things are likely to get worse before they get better. As the Football Association's technical co-ordinator, Don Howe is responsible for identifying ways to lift standards in the English game. Like everyone else, Howe has not been impressed by this week's efforts. "I have got a satelike dish at home and on a night like Tuesday I am forever twisting the dials around looking at games all over Europe, 10 minutes from Munich, 10 minutes from Liverpool, that sort of thing.

"I can compare what is going on and the difference is in midfield. At international and club level that is the key area, how midfielders adapt to tactics home and away; how well they protect the back four; how they break and pass.

"If you look at the teams that did well before the Heysel ban – Liverpool, Leeds and so on, they had players like Soumess and McDermott, Bremner and Giles, Siles and Charlton. They were great players who could defend the back four if needed, and be expressive when that was needed. They were all-round midfielders who could take responsibility.

"We have a very attractive Premier League with the ball flying in the net and lots of goalmouth incident. People say: 'Aren't we doing well – we're attracting great entertainers like Yeboah and Bergkamp'. But the country that has dominated European competition in recent years is Italy and that is because their players have discipline.

"They graft and dominate midfield. Look at Milan, with Desailly and Albertini. Away from home they sit in front of the back four, they track players back. At home they go forward earlier and support attacks. Our players do too much off the cuff – there is nothing wrong with that, but you have to do your job for your side first.

"Dick Advocaat, the coach at PSV, will tell you that his team have scored eight against Leeds but first they have made sure McAllister did not play, and they stopped Yeboah getting any freedom. We have to be positive and learn the lessons. We want our league to stay entertaining, but we do not want goals to be cheap.

Howe said the planned meeting between Terry Venables and the managers involved in Europe this season would speed that education process. Other on-going developments were outlined by Graham Kelly, the chief executive of the FA, yesterday. He pointed out that coaching courses are being re-designed and the development of young players reviewed.

However, Gordon Taylor, his counterpart at the Professional Footballers' Association, called for a more radical overhaul with greater involvement from former players and higher standards required for coaches.

Scottish football is also engaged in self-analysis, the SFA hav-

ing instituted a Commission of Inquiry after years of European failure. Among the consultants is Rinus Michels, the Dutch coach who instigated many of the programmes that have put Ajax at the fore of youth development.

His influence is already making itself felt. Alex Miller, the former Rangers defender who now manages Hibernian, this week announced that the Edinburgh club was to copy Ajax's example and begin coaching boys as young as six.

"I do not mind copying Rinus Michels' ideas or anybody else's if they are good ones," Miller said. "I believe this is the only direction for Scottish football to take. We have to relearn the game."

Howe has studied the Ajax system closely and he said: "I did not see fantastic coaching sessions. We have coaches who are as good. What I did see were long sessions and lots of them."

"It is like a military exercise. They train for an hour-and-a-quarter. Then they do their homework and have something to eat, then they train again. Their young players are getting six sessions a week, our best kids get one, it is nowhere near enough."

Changing this is a long-term programme. What can be done in the interim? One obvious step is to reduce the number of matches. After his team beat Celtic 3-0 at Parkhead on Thursday night Luis Fernandez, the coach of Paris St-Germain, said: "In France we play fewer games and teams have a chance to prepare for Europe. That could be a solution for you. Our national association helps as much as possible when we are preparing for a major European game. That does not happen in Britain."

This, at least, is not the FA's fault. They wanted the Premiership reduced to 18 teams when it was created – instead the greed of the clubs has held it at 20, and that only with reluctance.

Besides, reducing fixtures is one thing, getting players and clubs to use the free time wisely is another one entirely. Very few British players do extra skills training in the afternoon – Manchester United is one exception, but only because several players followed the example of Eric Cantona.

"Our players think afternoon training is a punishment," Howe said. "Glenn Roeder said when he went to Lazio with Paul Gascoigne their players thought they must have done something wrong if they did not get an afternoon session on skills."

"We do have too many games but one quote that has always worried me is when a player says: 'I would rather play than train'. That amazes me. What he is saying is he does not like training – but that is where you work on your game. Most foreign countries do not have reserve leagues; if you are not in the first team, all you do is train. That would blow our players' minds."

His thoughts are echoed by Ray Harford, manager of Champions' League failures Blackburn. "Foreign players want to improve, they work hard on their technique. Some of our players think: 'I've £1m in the bank, why bother working harder?'"

Meanwhile aspiring clubs could do worse than study Forest. "They have a midfield four which gets its shape quickly, picks people up and closes them down," Howe said. "It is a bit like they were under Brian Clough. They play nine-one; nine behind the ball and one up."

Forest will now test themselves against Lyon, conquerors of Lazio. It is a good draw. English clubs have only lost twice in 18 Anglo-French encounters. Of the three French clubs to have gone out of Europe this year two, Monaco and Auxerre, lost to English clubs. If only the rest of Europe were so easy to beat.

CHAMPIONS' LEAGUE

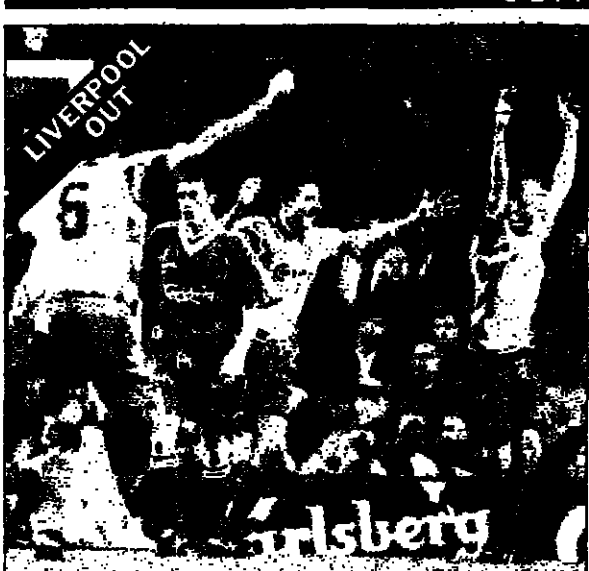


BLACKBURN ROVERS 0 LEGIA WARSAW 0
Six matches in European competition and Blackburn are still looking for their first-ever victory



RANGERS 0 JUVENTUS 4
Rangers' worst home defeat in 35 years of European competition

UEFA CUP



LIVERPOOL 0 BRONDBY 1 (Agg: 0-1)
Four-time European Cup winners, Liverpool became the first English team to lose to Danish opposition



PSV EINDHOVEN 3 LEEDS UNITED 0 (Agg: 8-3)
Leeds suffered their worst-ever aggregate defeat in European competition



BAYERN MUNICH 2 RAITH ROVERS 1 (Agg: 4-1)
Danny Lennon's goal for Raith was the only time a British team found the net in Europe this week



NOTTINGHAM FOREST 0 AUXERRE 0 (Agg: 1-0)
Forest, who needed rearguard action to advance, now face Lyon, conquerors of Lazio, in next round

CUP-WINNERS' CUP



FEYENOORD 1 EVERTON 0 (Agg: 1-0)
Sending-off of Craig Short summed up a week of misery for British teams in Europe

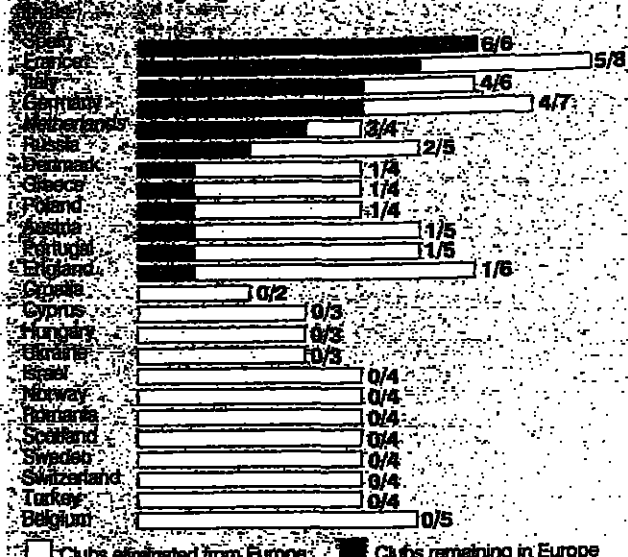


CELTIC 0 PARIS ST-GERMAIN 3 (Agg: 0-4)
Equality with Rangers at last – their heaviest home defeat in 35 years of European competition

THE SHIFTING BALANCE OF POWER

Season's performances

Rankings this season in Europe of 20 top-ranked countries (the rankings are based on previous performances in European competition). The first figure is the number of teams left in the competition; the second figure is the number of original entrants. The third figure is the number of teams left in the competition; the fourth figure is the number of teams left in the competition.



pick, or pass on any tips as to how we could improve our ball control in the way he advocates, but you have to suppose merely having him saying it is a minor triumph over the traditional British crumping method.

The final word, however, goes to Terry Venables. "They say under stress the last thing you learnt is the first thing you forget," he says on the tape. "And then you revert to habit. That's why you've got to repeat, repeat, repeat the good things until they become habits."

No problem then, I'll put in a repeat order for some Umbro kit, organise the hoardings and, as Devon Malcolm might put it, the *Daily Star* are history. Well, as long as they bring a ball along.

The Pro-Training Skill Factor is released by Umbro and VIP and is available at £12.99 from your nearest video store.

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English rugby to go professional in May

EXCLUSIVE

Rugby Union
STEVE BALE

The professional floodgates in English rugby union will be officially opened as soon as this season ends. When the Rugby Football Union's commission reports next week it will retain the temporary moratorium on club professionalism and the 120-day qualifying period for transferred players, but both will be removed completely in May.

The commission will not announce its findings until next Wednesday, but I understand its members reached agreement on their final verdict at a meeting in Slough on Thursday. In

essence, they have decided to embrace professionalism wholeheartedly, although those who have been pressing for rapid changes may be disappointed by the delay until next year.

The near-unanimous view of the RFU's First Division clubs is that professionalism should be instituted immediately. The commission hopes to allay clubs' impatience by introducing a football-style transfer system with fees payable and a formally appointed transfer tribunal made up of rugby-minded identities unconnected with any rugby club, organisation or indeed the union itself.

The prospect of a mass movement of players as soon as the restrictions are lifted does not concern the RFU, whose view is that it will have to happen some

time. "It may well be a paroxysm but at least it will be a paroxysm with plenty of advance notice," an RFU source said last night.

The commission's findings were discussed by the RFU executive yesterday. This is the union's measured response to the decision of the International Rugby Board in August to abandon amateurism and allow rugby union to go "open", a euphemism for professionalism. A special general meeting of all the RFU clubs will take place in London on 18 December to delete amateurism from the union's regulations.

While the commission has been meeting, English First Division clubs have been left so disaffected that there has been serious talk of a breakaway. They have formed themselves into a limited company and

taken instructions from Sir John Hall, of Newcastle United and Newcastle RFC, in how to form their own Premier League.

They will not get everything they want from the commission but the RFU is hoping to do sufficient to subdue their resentment. For instance, there will be no objection to clubs having primacy in negotiating contracts once this interim season - when only members of England squads will be paid - is over, provided the necessary contractual allowances are made for representative commitments.

In addition, the RFU is prepared to commit some of the vast sums it makes out of international rugby to the leading clubs to subsidise the new dispensation. Only Newcastle, through Sir John, have so far

found a substantial source of finance, though the north London club, Saracens, have now attracted a backer of their own and will announce their plans for the professional era on Tuesday.

The union is also ready to move on Europe. When the commission reports, it will recommend a restructuring of the domestic season so as to make room for English participation in a European competition which the RFU believes, after talking to the relevant broadcasting companies including ITV, would attract at least double the television revenue of the inaugural European Rugby Cup that started this week.

The RFU's plan involves Friday/Saturday play rather than midweek and envisages the support structure of a cross-bor-

der or Anglo-Welsh league. But such is the ill-feeling between the RFU and its fellow unions that it is by no means certain the other countries would acquiesce when they are already pleased with themselves after this week's successful Euro-launch.

English thinking is that the vastly increased monies available will be all the persuasion that is needed. The RFU - in the persons of Tony Hallett, the secretary, and John Jeavons-Fellows, chairman-elect of the executive committee - has done little but denigrate the present competition, even last week when a television deal with ITV of around £20m over three years was announced.

The union believes it will be able to mollify the First Division clubs who passed a vote of no-

confidence in the commission because of its composition. The seven-man body was appointed in September when the RFU introduced its moratorium on the introduction of professionalism at club level until next season.

Chaired by Hallett, it consists of four RFU committee men - the president, Bill Bishop, Jeavons-Fellows, Derek Morgan and Bob Taylor. Don Rutherford, the RFU's technical director, and Richard Mawditt, chairman of Bath, complete the commission.

The First Division clubs objected because, after receiving verbal assurances from Hallett and Bishop that Bryan Williams, son of Sale, would be added to Wilkinson's nomination, Mawditt agreed to remain on the commission in a personal ca-

pacit. Commission in law, tax, European Union, accountancy, equal opportunities and contract law.

The postscript to the commission's decision leaves the clubs vulnerable to the depredations of clubs such as Newcastle but it will be made clear to them that there is no bar to generous remuneration for off-the-field activities, nor on contracting players in readiness for the end of the season.

Despite the threat of a restraint-of-trade action, the 120-day registration has remained in place because the commission considered it unfair "to change the rules of the game at half-time". The RFU's legal advice is that for now there is no trade to restrain.

Cardiff's big day, page 24

Uefa unites to defend transfers

Football
TREVOR HAYLETT

The football industry rarely speaks with one voice but mention the name of Jean-Marc Bosman and it seems everyone falls into line. Yesterday Uefa's 49 member associations banded together to warn of the dangers facing the game should it sacrifice the transfer system and the rules restricting foreign players.

Graham Kelly, the Football Association's chief executive, said the implications of the court victory achieved by Bosman, a previously little-known Belgian player who single-handedly had instilled fear and concern among the game's power brokers, would be "very serious for football right across Europe".

North of the border, the predictions were cast in more gloomy tones - a "high percentage" of clubs would go out of business, said the Scottish FA.

Simultaneously yesterday the president of every European footballing association were putting their names to an open letter aimed at persuading the European Commission and individual governments of the perils lying in wait for the game if it follows the Bosman route.

The FA has also written to the prime minister and the Labour leader, Tony Blair, seeking support. Kelly said sport, particularly professional sport, had a specific "peculiar" nature which should be recognised so that normal rules did not apply.

The European Court of Justice will give its decision in the New Year but is thought unlikely to go against the interim ruling in September of its Advocate-General, Carl Otto Lenz, who declared the transfer market and the limit on three foreigners per team to be illegal.

It followed Bosman's fight for justice, waged over five years, after his Belgian club, RFC Liege, cut his salary by three-quarters at the end of his contract and demanded a transfer fee, so preventing him joining a French side, Dunkirk.

Having considered the Advocate-General's ruling and a submission from Kelly that the

English transfer system is an ideal role model for the European game to follow in the future, Uefa has now pinpointed the three "stark" implications arising from the case.

That power would be concentrated among a small number of rich clubs so reducing legitimate competition; that the traditional breeding grounds for new players, the small to medium-sized clubs, would be discouraged from pursuing youth development policies; and that the glut of foreign players across the top teams of Europe will harm national sides if home-grown talent is excluded.

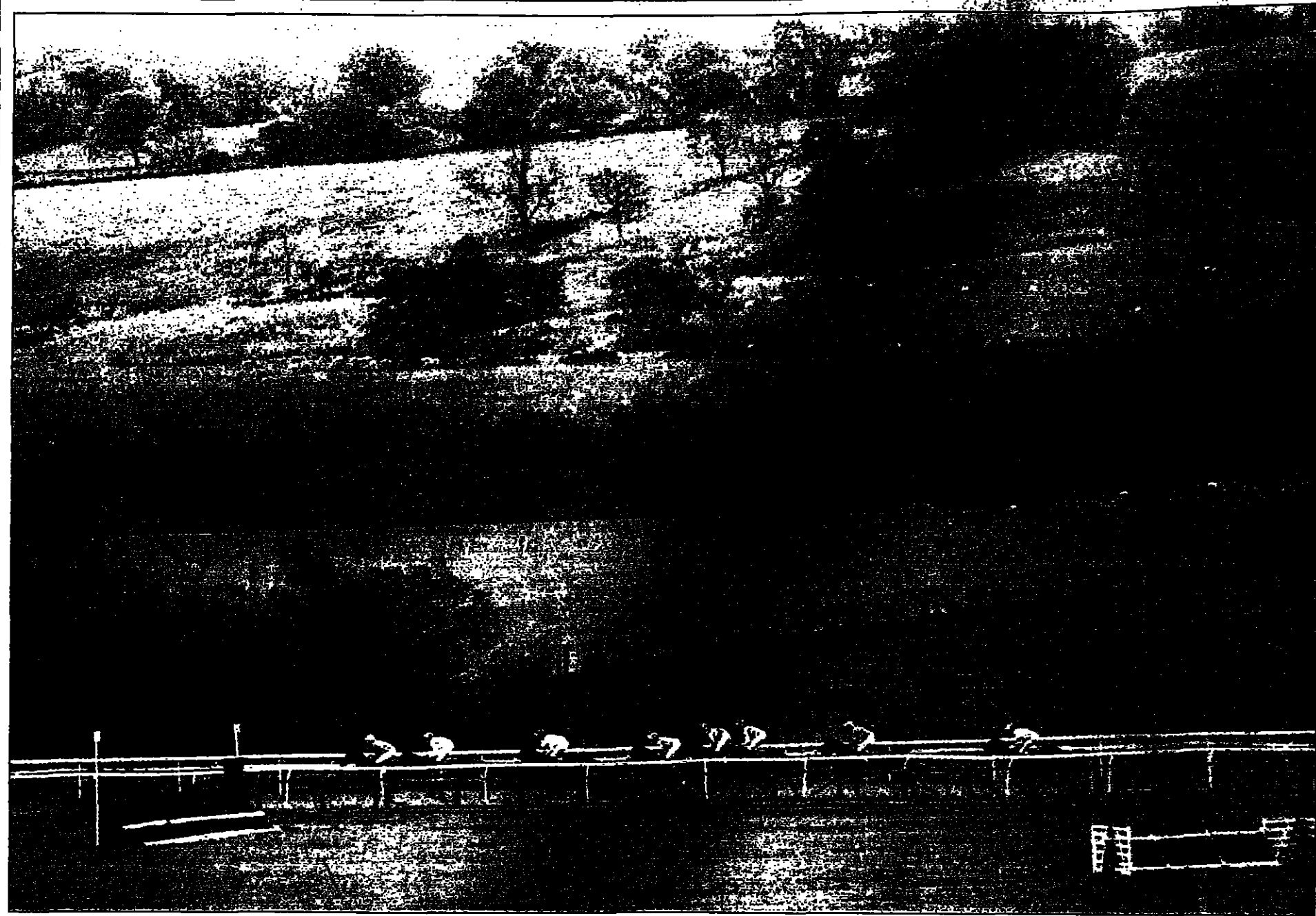
In addition European football would be split into two parts operating two different systems. Indeed, Uefa warns that European union associations will be in a different position from the rest of the world.

Describing it as a "nonsensical dispute that could have been avoided so easily", Kelly said the transfer structure was largely successful and should not be condemned because of one anomalous case. It did not need changing, although there have been discussions with the players union, the Professional Footballers' Association, as to how it could be improved.

The SFA's president, Bill Dickie, said scrapping the transfer system would sound the death knell for many of Scotland's 40 league clubs. "If there is no income from transfer fees then those who have been feeder clubs may cease to exist," he said. "Many communities would regret the loss of their local club which in good times and bad is the hub of their environment."

His organisation is at odds with Rangers who are lobbying Uefa to have the foreigners rule abolished. The SFA's chief executive, Jim Farry, said the club's action was misguided and if successful would make them a "wee fish in a big pool."

Newcastle had also wanted to challenge the restriction. Kelly said they had no support in the Premier League although Manchester United had objected to a proposal to extend the ruling to include Welsh, Irish and Scottish players.



Out in the country: Horses and jockeys ply their trade in the scenic surroundings of Hexham Racecourse yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

England running out of time

Cricket

JAMES ALEXANDEP
reports from East London

The hectic nature of modern tours, with their preponderance of international cricket, means players sometimes never have the chance to find elusive form.

Robin Smith might discover this to his cost in the coming weeks, but at least he has had his chances. England's bowlers, though, are desperately short of practice with the First Test just six cricketing days away.

No play was possible on the second day of the match against Border yesterday and now England have managed just two sessions out of the last nine. The players needed a breather following the end of the domestic

season, but this is getting ridiculous. Darren Gough and Dominic Cork have yet to bowl a single delivery in first-class cricket, while Devon Malcolm and Angus Fraser have no wickets in a combined total of 32 overs.

Those four could comprise England's attack at Centurion Park and Malcolm, of course, has plenty of other problems. If the inclement weather continues, the situation could become extremely serious because practice in the nets is no substitute for the real thing.

The wash-out gave John Crawley time to reflect on his form, which has brought him scores of 85 and 87 not out and applied pressure to Smith's position in the Test team. Crawley's physical state is

transformed since last winter's tour to Australia, his batting is more disciplined and his new look is even topped off by a crew cut. Raymond Illingworth told Crawley he must become fitter and more mobile to make a career in Test cricket. Crawley took heed.

His weight has dropped a stone to 13st 2oz, nearly all lost from his thighs and bottom, and his legs have changed from flabby to firm after hundreds of hours in the gym. Crawley's fielding and running between the wickets are noticeably improved. He has also brought a more professional approach to his batting. "I'm trying to remove mistakes and bat for as long as possible. Batsmen shouldn't get out in the 50s or 60s, they should really capitalise

when established. John Edrich, the England batting coach, tells all the batsmen to aim for a century every time and there's no doubt big scores attract selectors' attention. John is encouraging me to use softer hands and play a little straighter through mid-on."

TOUR MATCH (East London, second day of four): No play (rain). England 218 for 4 U P Crawley 87 no. M R Ramprakash 70 v Border.

England A win again, page 23

Docherty to go on fighting

Boxing

Drew Docherty, the British bantamweight champion, is to carry on boxing after the death of his most recent opponent James Murray, 25, who died two days after their title fight in Glasgow on 13 October.

Docherty, 29, said yesterday: "I have decided to carry on mainly because of the reaction of James Murray's father Kenny and my own parents Archie and Maureen. My mum and dad said if it had been me they would never have held it against James Murray. I couldn't sleep for three nights after the fight. It was tragic what happened and I am not over it yet."

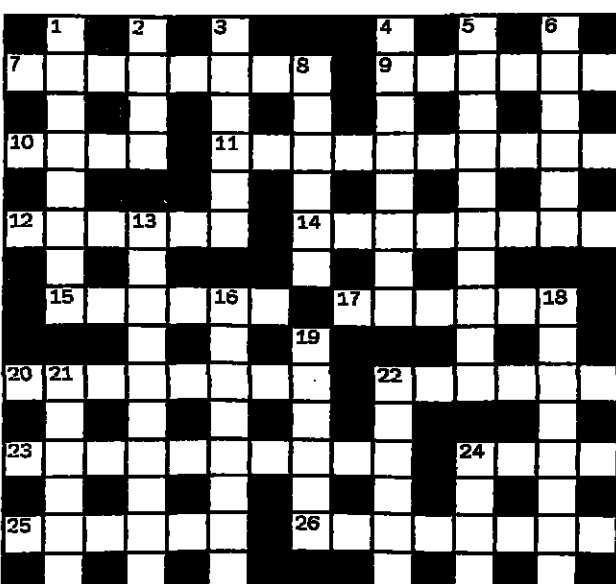
Docherty is to see a bereavement counsellor before his next fight, which is likely to be in February for the European title against Johnny Armour.

Docherty said the fight with Murray had been one of the hardest of his career and that any future victories would be dedicated to Murray's memory. Holyfield's motivation, page 23

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. Saturday 4 November

By Mass



The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the excellent Chambers Biographical Dictionary, worth £35. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode. Last week's winners were: JR Dore, Harrow; Mrs JM Thompson, Plymouth; Mrs I Rumsall, St Ives; Cambs: CG Argey, Bradford; Chris Barrell, Welwyn Garden City.

ACROSS

- 7 Gearbox? (8)
- 9 Bright, and initially called to the bar (6)
- 10 Word session (4)
- 11 Associating with one scam or engaging in another? (10)
- 12 Bird's cry turned Italian (6)
- 14 Boss sent out for apprentices (8)
- 15 Repeatedly print note on character (6)
- 17 Keen or weak on holy writ? (6)
- 20 What a brilliant catch! (8)
- 22 Henry's entering after a fizzy (6)
- 23 Detail in proof results in punishment (10)
- 24 Polish an unknown gem (4)
- 25 Dull face sergeant-major's wearing (6)
- 26 A little cut wood left, gathered by group (8)

DOWN

- 1 The driving force behind stubborn types? (8)
- 2 Bit of excitement gives one a turn (4)
- 3 Pole imbued with officer's charm (6)
- 4 Disease of curs spread about LA (8)
- 5 A drop in the housing situation? (10)
- 6 Raised money for a cheese agent (6)
- 8 Enters false name (6)
- 13 Luddite target to batter in after we rioted? (5-5)
- 16 Lavish, like the issues of sovereigns? (8)
- 18 Male among singers quivers (8)
- 19 Binders, features enclosing article (6)
- 21 Capricorn subject, about astrologer's last (6)
- 22 Nothing rising over retreat? A tree (6)
- 24 Stop losing head in Harrow? (4)

Friday's solution

SAUTERNE SPY
STONED EVELLES
T E R M E N T
DRACHMAI PORTER
CONFECTIONER
M A N H E R A
S A V E H O L D I N G
V C N M T
T H I R T Y B E R S K I N
L N C U S T H
L E A F A G E P A R G E L
E T L S U R
B Y R E S A N C T I O N

Last Saturday's solution

TRENCHCOAT IBIS
R T O O S B U A
A S H E N U N C H A R G E D
A M A N G O L B O
S O N A R T E T A T E T E
E O A D N A N
P O L I C E O F F I C E R S
T W O S
C A R B O N M O N I T O R
S P R I T C G
C U P F I N A L S P I E T A
R R O M T O O P N
A L O N G S I D E W H I S T
P V E G G E C G
E V E N N O N S T R I K E R

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Handwritten text in Arabic script: "هذا هو الأصل"